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LIVES

OF THE

QUEENS OF ENGLAND,

BY

AGNES STRICKLAND.

LIVES

OF THE

QUEENS OF ENGLAND,

FROM

THE NORMAN CONQUEST;

WITH

141895

ANECDOTES OF THEIR COURTS.

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BY

AGNES STRICKLAND.

"The treasures of antiquity laid up
In old historic rolls, I opened."

BEAUMONT.

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BERENGARIA OF NAVARRE,

THE QUEEN OF RICHARD I.

Mutual attachment of Berengaria and Richard—Berengaria's descent—Berengaria demanded in marriage—Travels with Queen Eleanora—Waits with her at Brindisi—Consigned to Queen Joanna—Embarks for Palestine with her—Storm—Terror of Berengaria—Berengaria lands—Nuptials at Cyprus—Costume of Queen Berengaria—Crowned Queen of England and Cyprus—Berengaria sails for Palestine—Received by King Philip at Acre—Her residence there—Berengaria embarks with Joanna—Richard shipwrecked—Imprisoned—Berengaria at Rome—Queens escorted by Count Raymond St. Gilles—Queen Joanna married to him—Misfortunes of King Richard—Eleanora's regency—Berengaria resigns the captive Cypriot—Berengaria's brother—Queen-mother returns with Richard to England—Berengaria forsaken—Richard's penitence—Berengaria's goodness—Follows Richard to war—Devoted love—King's death—Death of Queen Joanna—Berengaria's dower—Her pecuniary troubles—Builds abbey of Espan—Resides there—Dies there—Buried—Effigy—Character.

BERENGARIA, the beautiful daughter of Sancho the Wise, King of Navarre, was first seen by Richard Cœur de Lion, when Count of Poitou,[1] at a grand tournament given by her gallant brother at Pampeluna, her native city. Richard was then captivated by the beauty of Berengaria, but his engagement to the fair and frail Alice of France prevented him from offering her his hand.

[1] See preceding Memoir.

Berengaria may be considered a Provençal princess by language and education, though she was Spanish by descent. Her mighty sire, Sancho the Wise, had for his immediate ancestor Sancho the Great, called the Emperor of all Spain. He inherited the little kingdom of Navarre, and married Beatrice, daughter to Alphonso, King of Castille, by whom he had three children, Berengaria, Blanche, and Sancho, surnamed the Strong, a hero celebrated by the Provençal poets for his gallant exploits against the Moors. He defeated the Miramolin, and broke the chains that guarded the camp of the infidel with his battle-axe, which chains were afterwards transferred to the armorial bearings of Navarre.

An ardent friendship had subsisted from boyhood between Richard and Sancho the Strong, the gallant brother of Berengaria. A similarity of pursuits strengthened the intimacy of Richard with the royal family of Navarre. The father and brother of Berengaria were celebrated for their skill and judgment in Provençal poetry.[1] Berengaria was herself a learned princess; and Richard, who was not only a troubadour poet, but, as acting sovereign of Aquitaine, was the prince and judge of all troubadours, became naturally drawn into close bonds of amity with a family, whose tastes and pursuits were similar to his own.

No one can marvel that the love of the ardent Richard should be strengthened when he met the beautiful, the cultivated, and virtuous Berengaria, in the familiar intercourse which sprang from his friendship with her gallant brother;[2] but a long and secret

[1] Atlas Historique. [2] Chronicle of Navarre.

[2] Richard and his nephew, the troubadour count of Champagne, who afterwards married Blanche, the younger sister of Berengaria, were with Sancho

engagement, replete with "hope deferred," was the fate of Richard the Lion-hearted and the fair flower of Navarre.

Our early historians first mention the attachment of Richard and Berengaria about the year 1177. If we take that event for a datum, even allowing the princess to have been very young when she attracted the love of Richard, she must have been twenty-six at least before the death of his father placed him at liberty to demand her hand. Richard had another motive for his extreme desire for this alliance; he considered that his beloved mother, Queen Eleanora, was deeply indebted to King Sancho, the father of Berengaria, because he had pleaded her cause with Henry II., and obtained some amelioration of her imprisonment.

Soon after Richard ascended the English throne he sent his mother, Queen Eleanora, to the court of her friend, Sancho the Wise, to demand the Princess Berengaria in marriage, "for," says Vinisauf, "he had long loved the elegant girl." Sancho the Wise not only received the proposition with joy, but intrusted Berengaria to the care of Queen Eleanora. The royal ladies travelled from the court of Navarre together, across Italy to Naples, where they found the ships belonging to Eleanora had arrived in the bay. But etiquette forbade Berengaria to approach her lover till he was free from the claims of Alice; therefore she sojourned with Queen Eleanora at Brindisi, in the spring of 1191, waiting the message from King Richard, announcing that he was free to receive the hand of the Princess of Navarre.

the Strong on the most intimate terms of friendship, being *fratres jurati*, or sworn brothers, according to a custom of the chivalric ages.

It was at Messina that the question of the engagement between the Princess Alice and King of England was debated with Philip Augustus, her brother; and more than once, the potentates assembled for the crusade expected that the forces of France and England would be called into action, to decide the right of King Richard to give his hand to another lady than the sister of the King of France.

The rhymes of Piers of Langtoft recapitulate these events with brevity and quaintness:—

"Then spake King Philip,
And in grief said,
'My sister Alice
Is now forsaken,
Since one of more riches
Of Navarre hast thou taken.'
When King Richard understood
What King Philip had sworn,
Before clergy he stood,
And proved on that morn,
That Alice to his father
A child had borne,
Which his sire King Henry
Held for his own.
A maiden child it was,
And now dead it is.'
'This was a great trespass,
And against mine own witte,
If I Alice take.'"

King Philip then contends that Richard held in hand his sister's dower, the good city of Gisors. Upon this, the King of England brings the matter to a conclusion in these words:—

"Now, said King Richard,
That menace may not be,
For thou shall have ward
Of Gisors thy citée,

And treasure ilk a deal.
Richard yielded him his *right*,
His treasure and his town,
Before witness at *sight*,
(Of clerk and eke baron,)
His sister he might marry,
Wherever God might like,
And, to make certainty,
Richard a quittance took."

The French contemporary chroniclers, who are exceedingly indignant at the repudiation of their princess, attribute it solely to Eleanora's influence. Bernard, the treasurer, says, "The old queen could not endure that Richard should espouse Alice, but demanded the sister of the king of Navarre for a wife for her son. At this the king of Navarre was right joyful, and she travelled with Queen Eleanora to Messina. When she arrived Richard was absent, but Queen Joanna was there, preparing herself to embark next day. The queen of England could not tarry, but said to Joanna—'Fair daughter, take this damsel for me to the king your brother, and tell him I command him to espouse her speedily.' Joanna received her willingly, and Eleanora returned to France."[1]

Piers of Langtoft resumes :—

"She be left Berengere,
At Richard's costage,
Queen Joanne held her dear;
They lived as doves in cage."

King Richard and King Tancred were absent on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Agatha at Catania, where Tancred must have devoutly prayed for the riddance of his guest. Richard here presented the Sicilian king with a famous sword, pretending it was Caliburn, the brand of King Arthur, lately found at

[1] Bernard le Tresorier.

Glastonbury during his father's antiquarian researches for the tomb of that king.

Richard then embarked in his favourite galley, named by him Trenc-the-mere.[1] He had previously, in honour of his betrothment, instituted an order of twenty-four knights, who pledged themselves in a fraternity with the king to scale the walls of Acre; and that they might be known in the storming of that city, the king appointed them to wear a blue band of leather on the left leg, from which they were called Knights of the Blue Thong.

The season of Lent prevented the immediate marriage of Richard and his betrothed; and, as etiquette did not permit the unwedded maiden Berengaria to embark in the Trenc-the-mere under the immediate protection of her lover, she sailed, in company with Queen Joanna, in one of the strongest ships, under the care of a brave knight, called Stephen de Turnham.

After these arrangements Richard led the van of the fleet in Trenc-the-mere, bearing a huge lantern at her poop, to rally the fleet in the darkness of night. Thus, with a hundred and fifty ships and fifty galleys, did Lion-hearted Richard and his bride and sister hoist sail for Palestine, where Philip Augustus had already indolently commenced the siege of Acre.

"Syrian virgins wail and weep,
English Richard ploughs the deep."

[1] Literally meaning, *cut-the-sea*. It is Piers of Langtoft who preserves the name of this vessel.

[2] Hoveden. Sir Egerton Bridges names Roger St. John as one of these early Knights of the Garter. St. George was the tutelary saint of Aquitaine; his name was the war-cry of the dukedom. King Richard had a vision of St. George when he undertook the crusade, and many indications throughout the chroniclers show that St. George was considered the patron saint of the expedition.

But we must turn a deaf ear to the bewitching metre of polished verse, and quote details taken by Piers of Langtoft from the Provençal comrade of Richard and Berengaria's crusade voyage.

"Till King Richard be forward,
He may have no rest,
Acres then is his tryste,
Upon Saracen fiends,[1]
To venge Jesu Christ,
Hitherward he wends.
The king's sister Joanne,
And Lady Berengare,
Foremost sailed of ilk one;
Next them his chancellor,
Roger Mancel.
The chancellor so hight,
His tide fell not well;
A tempest on him light,
His ship was down borne,
Himself there to die;
The king's seal was lost,
With other gallies tway.
Lady Joanna she
The Lord Jesu besought,
In Cyprus she might be
To haven quickly brought,
The maiden Berengare,
She was sore afright,
That neither far nor near,
Her king rode in sight."

Queen Joanna was alarmed for herself; but the maiden Berengaria only thought of Richard's safety.

Bernard, the treasurer, does not allow that Joanna was quite so much frightened. We translate his words: "Queen Joanna's galley sheltered in the harbour of Limoussa, when Isaac, the lord of Cyprus, sent two boats, and demanded if the queen would land. She declined the offer, saying, 'all she wanted was to know

[1] Fiend means enemy in German, and doubtless in Anglo-Saxon.

whether the king of England had passed.' They replied, 'they did not know.' At that juncture Isaac approached with a great power, upon which the chevaliers who guarded the royal ladies got the galley in order to be rowed out of the harbour at the first indication of hostility. Meantime Isaac, who saw Berengaria on board, demanded 'What damsel that was with them?' They declared, 'she was the sister of the king of Navarre, whom the king of England's mother had brought for him to espouse.' Isaac seemed so angry at this intelligence, that Stephen de Turnham gave signal to heave up the anchor, and the queen's galley rowed with all speed into the offing."[1]

When the gale had somewhat abated, King Richard, after mustering his navy, found not only that the ship was missing, wherein were drowned both the chancellor of England and the great seal, but the galley that bore the precious freight of his sister and his bride. He immediately sailed from a friendly Cretan harbour in search of his lost ships. When arrived off Cyprus, he entered the bay of Famagusta, and beheld the galley that contained his princesses, labouring heavily and tossing in the offing. He became infuriated with the thought that some wrong had been offered to them, and leaped, armed as he was, into the first boat that could be prepared. His anger increased on learning that the queen's galley had put into the bay in the storm, but had been driven inhospitably from shelter by the threats of the Greek despot.[2]

At the time of Richard's landing, Isaac and all his

[1] Guizot's Edition of Bernard le Tresorier.

[2] Vinisauf and Piers Langtoft. *Despot* was a title given to the petty Greek potentates.

islanders were busily employed in plundering the wreck of the chancellor's ship and two English transports then stranded on the Cypriot shore. As this self-styled emperor, though in behaviour worse than a pagan, professed to be a Christian, Richard, at his first landing, sent him a civil message, suggesting the propriety of leaving off plundering his wrecks. To this Isaac returned an impertinent answer, saying, "that whatever goods the sea threw on his island he should take without asking leave of any one."

"They shall be bought full dear, by Jesu, heaven's king!"

With this saying, Richard, battle-axe in hand, led his crusaders so boldly to the rescue, that the mock emperor and his Cypriots scampered into Limoussa, the capital of the island, much faster than they had left it.

Freed from the presence of the inhospitable despot, King Richard made signals for Joanna's galley to enter the harbour. Berengaria, half dead with fatigue and terror, was welcomed on shore by the conquering king, when, says the chronicler, "there was joy and love enow."

As soon as Isaac Comnenus was safe behind the walls of his citadel, he sent a message to request a conference with King Richard, who expected that he had a little lowered the despot's pride; but when they met, Isaac was so full of vapouring and boasting, that he elicited from King Richard an aside in English; and as Cœur de Lion then uttered the only words in our language he ever was known to speak, it is well they have been recorded by chronicle.

"Ha! de debil!"[1] exclaimed King Richard, "he speak like a fole Breton."[2]

As Isaac and Richard could not come to any terms of pacification, the despot retreated to a stronghold in a neighbouring mountain: while Richard, after making a speech to the Londoners (we hope in more choice English than the above), instigating them to the storm of the Cypriot capital with promise of plunder, led them on to the attack, axe in hand. The Londoners easily captured Limoussa.

Directly the coast was clear of Isaac and his myrmidons, magnificent preparations were made at Limoussa for the nuptials and coronation of King Richard and Berengaria. We are able to describe the appearance made by these royal personages at this high solemnity. King Richard's costume, we may suppose, varied little from that in which he gave audience to the despot Isaac a day after the marriage took place.[3]

"A satin tunic of rose-colour was belted round his waist: his mantle was of striped silver tissue, brocaded with silver half moons: his sword of fine Damascus steel had a hilt of gold, and a silver-scaled sheath: on his head he wore a scarlet bonnet, brocaded in gold, with figures of animals. He bore a truncheon in his hand. His Spanish steed was led before him, saddled, and bitted with gold, and the saddle was inlaid with precious stones: two little golden lions were fixed on it, in the place of a crupper: they were figured with

[1] Piers of Langtoft.

[2] This speech implied no offence to the English, but was meant as a reproach to the Bretons, who are to this day proverbial in France for their wilfulness. Besides, Richard was bitter against the Bretons, who deprived him of the society of his then acknowledged heir Arthur, their duke. *(Vinisauf.)*

[3] Vinisauf.

their paws raised in act to strike each other." In this attire, Vinisauf adds, Richard, who had yellow curls, a bright complexion, and a figure like Mars himself, appeared a perfect model of military and manly grace.

The effigy of Queen Berengaria at Espan certainly presents her as a bride,—a circumstance which is ascertained by the flowing tresses, royal matrons always wearing their hair covered, or else closely braided.

Her hair is parted, *à la vierge,* on the brow; a transparent veil open on each side, like the Spanish mantillas, hangs behind, and covers the rich tresses at their length; the veil is confined by a regal diadem of peculiar splendour, studded with several bands of gems, and surmounted by *fleurs-de-lis,* to which so much foliage is added as to give it the appearance of a double crown, perhaps because she was crowned queen of Cyprus as well as England. Our antiquaries affirm that the peculiar character of Berengaria's elegant but singular style of beauty brings conviction to every one who looks on her effigy that it is a carefully finished portrait.[1]

At his marriage King Richard proclaimed a grand feast.

"To Limoussa the lady was led,
His feast the king did cry,
Berengere will be wed,
And sojourn thereby
The third day of the feast;
Bishop Bernard of Bayonne
Newed oft the geste
To the queen he gave the crown."[2]

"And there, in the joyous month of May, 1191," says an ancient writer, "in the flourishing and spacious

[1] See frontispiece. [2] May 12th, Row's Chronicle, p. 194.

isle of Cyprus, celebrated as the very abode of the goddess of love, did King Richard solemnly take to wife his beloved lady Berengaria. By the consent of the Cypriots, wearied of Isaac's tyranny, and by the advice of the allied crusaders who came to assist at his nuptials, Richard was crowned King of Cyprus, and his bride Queen of England and Cyprus.

Soon after, the fair heiress of Cyprus, daughter to the despot Isaac, came and threw herself at the feet of Richard. "Lord King," she said, "have mercy on me," when the king courteously put forth his hand to lift her from the ground, and sent her to his wife and his sister Joanna. As many historical scandals are afloat respecting the Cypriot princess, implying that Richard, captivated by the distressed beauty, from that moment forsook his queen, it is well to observe the words of an eye-witness,[1] who declares that Richard sent the lady directly to his queen, from whom she never parted till after their return to Europe.

The surrender of the Cypriot princess was followed by the capture of her father, whom the king of England bound in silver chains richly gilt, and presented to Queen Berengaria as her captive.[2]

After the conclusion of the nuptials and coronation of Berengaria, her royal bridegroom once more hoisted his flag on his good galley Trenc-the-mere, and set sail in beautiful summer weather for Palestine. Berengaria and her sister-in-law again sailed under the protection of Sir Stephen de Turnham, it being safer than

[1] The Provençal metrical history, who is the guide of Piers of Langtoft.

[2] Isaac afterwards entered among the Templars, and in their order died. Richard presented his island to Guy de Lusignan, his friend, as a compensation for the loss of Jerusalem. This dethronement of Isaac, and the captivity of his daughter, were the origin of Richard's imprisonment in Germany, as we shall presently see.

companionship with the warlike Richard.[1] Their galley made the port of Acre before the Trenc-the-mere.

"On their arrival at Acre, though," says Bernard le Tresorier, "it was very grievous to the king of France to know that Richard was married to any other than his sister; yet he received Berengaria with great courtesy, taking her in his arms, and lifting her on shore himself from the boat to the beach."[2]

Richard appeared before Acre on the long bright day of St. Barnabas, when the whole allied army, elated by the naval victory he had won by the way, marched to the beach to welcome their champion. "The earth shook with footsteps of the Christians, and the sound of their shouts."

When Acre was taken, Richard established his queen and sister safely there. They remained at Acre with the Cypriot princess, during the whole of the Syrian campaign, under the care of Richard's Castellans, Bertrand de Verdun and Stephen de Munchenis.

To the left of the mosque at Acre are the ruins of a

[1] The king's arrival was delayed by a naval battle with a rich Saracen argosie, which he captured with great plunder. The manœuvres of the Trenc-the-mere are thus described by the Provençal; likewise the casting of the Greek fire.

"The king's own galley
He called it Trenc-the-mere;
It was first under weigh,
And came that ship full near,
Who threw her buckets out.
The galley to her drew,
The king stood full stout,
And many of them slew,
Though wild fire* they cast."

[2] See vignette of this volume.

* Greek fire.

palace, called to this day King Richard's Palace;[1] this was doubtless the abode of Berengaria.

There is not a more pleasant spot in history than the tender friendship of Berengaria and Joanna, who formed an attachment amidst the perils and terrors of storm and siege, ending only with their lives.[2] How quaintly, yet expressively, is their gentle and feminine love for each other marked by the sweet simplicity of the words,

> "They held each other dear,
> And lived as doves in cage!"

noting, at the same time, the harem-like seclusion in which the royal ladies dwelt, while sharing the crusade campaign.

It was from the citadel of Acre that Richard tore down the banner of Leopold, archduke of Austria, who was the uncle of the Cypriot lady. Her captivity was the real matter of dispute.

We have little space to dwell on Richard's deeds of romantic valour in Palestine, on the capture of Ascalon, or the battle of Jaffa, before which city was killed Richard's good steed, named Fanuelle, whose feats in battle are nearly as much celebrated by the troubadours as those of his master.[3]

[1] Dr. Clarke's Travels. The tradition is that Richard built the palace; but he had no time for any such work. The architecture is Saracenic, and was doubtless a palace of the resident emir of Acre.

[2] Madame Cottin, in her celebrated but florid romance of Mathilde, has some faint idea that a sister of Richard's shared his crusade with Berengaria; but neither that lady nor Sir Walter Scott seem aware which princess of England was the person.

[3] By some called Favelle, probably Flavel, meaning yellow-coloured. Vinisauf declares this peerless charger was taken among the spoils of Cyprus, with another named Lyard. The cavaliers in ancient times named their steeds from their colour, as *Bayard*, bay-colour; *Lyard*, grey; *Ferraunt*, black as iron; *Flavel*, yellow or very light sorrel.

After the death of Fanuelle, Richard was obliged to fight on foot. The courteous Saladin, who saw him thus battling, was shocked that so accomplished a cavalier should be dismounted, and sent him as a present a magnificent Arab charger. Richard had the precaution to order one of his knights to mount the charger first. The headstrong beast no sooner found a stranger on his back, than he took the bit between his teeth, and, refusing all control, galloped back to his own quarters, carrying the Christian knight into the midst of Saladin's camp. If King Richard had ridden the wilful animal, he would in like manner have been at the mercy of the Saracens; and Saladin was so much ashamed of the misbehaviour of his present, that he could scarcely look up while he apologised to the Christian knight; for it appeared as if he had laid a trap for the liberty of King Richard. He sent back the knight mounted on a more manageable steed, on which Richard rode to the end of the campaign.

King Richard, during his Syrian campaign, was once within sight of Jerusalem, but never took it. While he was with his queen Berengaria at Acre, an incident befel him, of which de Joinville, the companion in arms of St Louis, has thus preserved the memory.

"In those times, when Hugh Duke of Burgundy and King Richard of England were abiding at Acre, they received intelligence that they might take Jerusalem if they chose, for its garrison had gone to the assistance of Damascus. The Duke of Burgundy[2] and

[1] Chronicle of Bernard le Tresorier.

[2] Philip Augustus and the Duke of Austria decamped from the crusade at Cesarea. Hugh of Burgundy commanded the remnant of the French forces.

King Richard accordingly marched towards the holy city, King Richard's battalions leading the way, while Burgundy's force brought up the rear. But when King Richard drew near to Jerusalem, intelligence was brought him that the Duke of Burgundy had turned back with his division, out of pure envy, that it might not be said that the King of England had taken Jerusalem. As these tidings were discussing, one of the King of England's knights cried out,

"'Sire, sire, only come hither, and I will show you Jerusalem.'

"But the king, throwing down his weapons, said, with tears in his eyes, and hands uplifted to heaven—

"'Ah! Lord God, I pray thee that I may never see thy holy city Jerusalem, since things thus happen, and since I cannot deliver it from the hands of thine enemies!' Richard could do nothing more than return to his queen and sister at Acre.

"You must know that this King Richard performed such deeds of prowess when he was in the Holy Land, that the Saracens, on seeing their horses frightened at a shadow or a bush, cried out to them, 'What! dost think Melech-Ric is there?' This they were accustomed to say from the many times he had vanquished them. In like manner, when the children of Turks or Saracens cried, their mothers said to them, 'Hush, hush! or I will give you to King Richard;' and from the terror of these words the babes were instantly quiet."[1]

[1] Joinville's words are thus paraphrased by Dryden:

"No more Sebastian's formidable name
Is longer used to still the crying babe."

The Provençal historian affirms that the final truce between Richard and Saladin was concluded in a fair flowery meadow[1] near Mount Tabor, where Richard was so much charmed with the gallant bearing of the Prince of Miscreants, as Saladin is civilly termed in the crusading treaties, that he declared he would rather be the friend of that brave and honest pagan, than the ally of the crafty Philip or the brutal Leopold.

The autumn of 1192 had commenced, when King Richard concluded his peace with Saladin, and prepared to return, covered with fruitless glory, to his native dominions. A mysterious estrangement had at this time taken place between him and Berengaria; yet the chroniclers do not mention that any rival had supplanted the queen, but merely that accidents of war had divided him from her company. As for the Cypriot princess, if he were estranged from his queen, he must likewise have been separated from the fair captive, since she always remained with Berengaria.

The king bade farewell to his queen and sister, and saw them embark the very evening of his own departure. The queens were accompanied by the Cypriot princess, and sailed from Acre, under the care of Stephen de Turnham, September the 29th. Richard meant to return by a different route across Europe. He travelled in the disguise of a Templar, and embarked in a ship belonging to the master of the Temple. This vessel was wrecked off the coast of Istria, which forced Richard to proceed homewards through the domains of his enemy, Leopold of Austria. But to his ignorance of geography is attributed his near approach to Leopold's capital. After several

[1] Piers Langtoft.

narrow escapes, a page sent by Richard to purchase provisions at a village near Vienna was recognised by an officer who had made the late crusade with Leopold. The boy was seized, and, after enduring cruel torments, he confessed where he had left his master.

When Leopold received certain intelligence where Richard harboured, the inn was searched, but not a soul found there who bore any appearance of a king. "No," said the people, "there is no one here, without he be the Templar in the kitchen, now turning the fowls which are roasting for dinner." The officers of Leopold took the hint and went into the kitchen, where in fact was seated a Templar very busy turning the spit. The Austrian chevalier who had served in the crusade knew him, and said quickly, "There he is, seize him!"

Cœur de Lion started from the spit, and did battle for his liberty right valiantly, but was overborne by numbers.[1]

The revengeful Leopold immediately imprisoned his gallant enemy, and immured him so closely in a Styrian castle, called Tenebreuse, that for months no one knew whether the lion-hearted king was alive or dead. Richard, whose heroic name was the theme of admiration in Europe, and the burden of every song, seemed vanished from the face of the earth.

Better fortune attended the vessel that bore the fair freight of the three royal ladies. Stephen de Turnham's galley arrived without accident at Naples, where Berengaria, Joanna, and the Cypriot princess landed safely, and, under the care of Sir Stephen, journeyed to Rome.

[1] Translated from Bernard le Tresorier. Guizot's Chronicles.

The Provençal traditions declare, that here Berengaria first took the alarm that some disaster had happened to her lord, from seeing a belt of jewels offered for sale, which she knew had been in his possession when she parted from him. At Rome she likewise heard some vague reports of his shipwreck, and of the enmity of the emperor Henry VI.[1]

Berengaria was detained at Rome with her royal companions, by her fear of the emperor, for upwards of half a year. At length the Pope, moved by her distress and earnest entreaties, sent them, under the care of Messire Mellar, one of the cardinals, to Pisa, whence they proceeded to Genoa, where they took shipping to Marseilles. At Marseilles Berengaria was met by her friend and kinsman, the king of Arragon, who showed the royal ladies every mark of reverence, gave them safe conduct through his Provençal domains, and sent them on under the escort of the Count de Sancto Egidio.

This Egidio is doubtless the gallant Raymond Count St. Gilles, who, travelling from Rome with a strong escort, offered his protection to the distressed queens; and though his father, the Count of Toulouse, had during Richard's crusade invaded Guienne, and drawn on himself a severe chastisement from Berengaria's faithful brother, Sancho the Strong; yet the young count so well acquitted himself of his charge, that he won the affections of the fair widow, Queen Joanna, on the journey.[2] The attachment of these lovers healed the enmity that had long subsisted between the house of Aquitaine and that of the Counts of Toulouse, on account of the superior claims of Queen Eleanora on

[1] Hoveden's Chronicle. [2] Roger Hoveden, fol. 447.

that great fief. When Eleanora found the love that subsisted between her youngest child and the heir of Toulouse, she conciliated his father by giving up her rights to her daughter, and Berengaria had the satisfaction of seeing her two friends united after she arrived at Poitou.[1]

Now Queen Berengaria is left safely in her own dominions, it is time to return to her unfortunate lord, who seems to have been destined by the malice of Leopold to a life-long incarceration. The royal prisoner almost despaired of liberty when he wrote that pathetic passage in his well-known Provençal tenson, saying, "Now know I for a certainty that there exists for me neither friend nor parent, or for the lack of gold and silver I should not so long remain a prisoner."

He scarcely did justice to his affectionate mother, who, directly she learned his captivity, never ceased exerting herself for his release.

Without giving any credence to the ballad story of King Richard and the Lion's heart, which solely seems to have arisen from a metaphorical epithet of the troubadour Peyrols,[2] and is not even alluded to by the most imaginative of contemporary chroniclers, it really appears that Richard was ill-treated during his Ger-

[1] Piers of Langtoft says, that King Richard betrothed his sister to the gallant crusader St. Gilles in Palestine, an assertion contradicted by the enmity subsisting between the Count, his father, and the English king.

[2] In the beautiful crusade *sirvente* extant by Peyrols, he calls the king *lion-hearted Richard*. Peyrols was his fellow-soldier.—(*Sismondi.*)

The earliest chronicler who mentions the lion legend is Rastall, the brother-in-law of Sir Thomas More, who had no better means of knowing the truth than we have. Here are his quaint sayings on the subject.

"It is said that a lyon was put to king Richard, being in prison, to have devoured him, and when the lyon was gaping he put his arm in his mouth and *pulled the lion by the heart so hard* that he slew the lyon; and therefore is called Cœur de Lyon, while others say he is called Cœur de Lyon because of his boldness and hardy stomach."

man captivity. Matthew Paris declares he was thrown into a dungeon from whence no other man ever escaped with life, and was loaded with irons; yet his countenance was ever serene, and his conversation pleasant and facetious, with the crowds of armed guards by whom he was surrounded day and night.

It was a long time before Richard's friends could with any certainty make out his locality. He was utterly lost for some months. Blondel, a troubadour knight and poet, who had been shipwrecked with him on the coast of Istria, and who had sought him through the cities of southern Germany, sang, beneath the tower Tenebreuse in which he was confined, a *tenson* which Richard and he had composed together. Scarcely had he finished the first stanza,[1] when Richard replied with the second. Blondel directly went to Queen Eleanora, and gave her tidings of the existence of her son, and she took measures for his release. Her letters to the pope are written with a passionate eloquence, highly illustrative of that tradition of the south which names her among the poets of her country.

"Mother of pity," she says, "look upon a mother of so many afflictions! or if thy holy Son, the fountain of mercy, afflicts my son for my transgression, oh, let me, who am the cause, endure alone the punishment.

"Two sons alone remain for my succour, who but indeed survive for my misery; for King Richard exists in fetters, while Prince John, brother to the captive,

[1] Blondel's tenson is not preserved, but the poem Richard composed is still in the Bibliothèque Royale. There is no just reason for doubting this Provençal tradition of Blondel's agency in the discovery of Richard. Crescembini and most foreign historians authenticate it. The Penny Cyclopedia, not very favourable to romance, looks on it as we do. In fact it is consistent with the manners and customs of the era.

depopulates with the sword, and wastes with fire. The Lord is against me, his wrath fights against me, therefore do my children fight against each other!"

The queen-mother here alludes to the strife raised by Prince John. He had obtained his brother's leave to abide in England on condition that he submitted to the government established there. Queen Eleanora had intended to fix her residence at Rouen, as a central situation between her own dominions and those of King Richard. But the confused state of affairs in England summoned her thither, February 11, 1192. She found John in open rebellion, for, stimulated by messages from Philip Augustus, offering him all Richard's continental provinces and the hand of Alice rejected by Richard, he aimed at nothing less than the English crown. The arrival of his mother curbed his turbulence; she told him to touch his brother's rights under peril of her curse; she forbade his disgraceful intention of allying himself with Alice; and, to render such mischievous project impossible, she left that princess in close confinement at Rouen, instead of delivering her to Philip Augustus, as King Richard had agreed; so little truth is there in the common assertion that the worthless character of John might be attributed to the encouragement his vices received from his mother; but it was the doting affection of Henry II. for his youngest son that had this effect, as he was the child of his old age and constantly near him, while the queen was kept in confinement at a distance from her family.

When Queen Eleanora and the chief justiciary heard of the detention of King Richard, they sent two abbots

[1] Richard of Devizes, p. 57.

to confer with him in Germany. They met him with his guards on the road to Worms, where a diet of the empire was soon to be held, and were received by him with his usual spirit and animation. He inquired into the state of his friends, his subjects, and his dominions, and particularly after the health of the King of Scotland, on whose honour, he said, he entirely relied; and certainly he was not deceived in his judgment of the character of that hero. On hearing of the base conduct of his brother John, he was shocked and looked grave; but presently recovering his cheerfulness, he said, with a smile, "My brother John was never made for conquering kingdoms!"[1]

Richard defended himself before the diet with eloquence and pathos that drew tears from most of his hearers; and the mediation of the princes of the empire induced the emperor to accept as ransom one hundred thousand marks of silver.

Meantime the ransom was collected in England, Normandy, and Aquitaine, to which Queen Eleanora largely contributed. When the first instalment was ready, this affectionate mother and the chief justiciary set out for Germany, a little before Christmas. Queen Eleanora was accompanied by her grand-daughter Eleanora, surnamed the Pearl of Brittany. This young princess was promised, by the ransom-treaty, in marriage to the heir of Leopold of Austria.[2] The Cypriot princess was likewise taken from the keeping of Queen Berengaria, on the demand of the emperor, and surrendered to her German relatives.[3]

[1] Hoveden.

[2] The marriage was afterwards broken.

[3] She was the daughter of the Duke of Austria's sister; hence the extreme hatred borne by Leopold to Richard; he considered, and not unreasonably, that Richard had disinherited his niece. The Emperor Henry was her first cousin.

It was owing to the exertions of the gallant Guelphic princes, his relations, that the actual liberation of Cœur de Lion was at last effected. Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony,[1] and his sons appeared before the diet and pleaded the cause of the English hero with the most passionate eloquence; they pledged their credit for the payment of the remainder of his ransom, and actually left William of Winchester, the youngest Guelphic prince, in pawn with the emperor for the rest of the ransom.

After an absence of four years, three months, and nine days, King Richard landed at Sandwich, in April, the Sunday after St. George's day, in company with his royal mother, who had the pleasure of surrendering to him his dominions, both insular and continental, without diminution,

Eleanor's detention of the Princess Alice in Normandy had drawn on that country a fierce invasion from Philip Augustus, the result of which would have been doubtful, if the tears of Berengaria, then newly arrived in Aquitaine, had not prevailed on her noble brother, Sancho the Strong, to traverse France with two hundred choice knights. By the valour of this hero, and his chivalric reinforcement, Normandy was delivered from the King of France.[2]

Berengaria, during the imprisonment of her royal husband, lost her father, Sancho the Wise, King of Navarre, who died in 1194,[3] after a glorious reign of forty-four years.

After a second coronation, Richard went in progress throughout England, with his royal mother, to sit in

[1] Her majesty Queen Victoria is the representative of this great and generous prince: and at the same time, from his wife, Matilda, eldest daughter of Henry II., derives a second direct descent from the house of Plantagenet. Tyrrell.

[2] History of Navarre.

judgment on those castellans who had betrayed their fortresses to his brother John. At all these councils Queen Eleanora assisted him, being treated by her son with the utmost reverence, and sitting in state at his right hand.

The magnanimous Cœur de Lion treated these rebels with great lenity; and when Prince John, on the arrival of the king at Rouen, being introduced by Queen Eleanora, knelt at his brother's feet for pardon, he raised him with this remarkable expression: "I forgive you, John, and I wish I could as easily forget your offence as you will my pardon."

King Richard finished his progress by residing some months in his Angevin territories. Although he was in the vicinity of the loving and faithful Berengaria, he did not return to her society. The reason of this estrangement was, that the king had renewed his connexion with a number of profligate and worthless associates, the companions of his long bachelorhood in his father's lifetime. His conduct at this time infinitely scandalised all his subjects, as he abandoned himself to drinking and great infamy; for which various virtuous churchmen reproved him boldly, to their credit be it spoken.

"The spring of 1195, Richard was hunting in one of his Norman forests,[1] when he was met by a hermit, who recognised him, and preached him a very eloquent sermon on his irregular life, finishing by prophesying, that unless he repented, his end and punishment were close at hand. The king answered slightingly, and went his way; but the Easter following he was seized with a most severe illness, which threatened to be fatal,

[1] Tyrrell, from a Chronicle by Rigord. Maitre Rigord was originally a medical man; he was the contemporary of King Richard and King John.

when he remembered the saying of the hermit-prophet, and, greatly alarmed, he began to repent of his sins."

Richard sent for all the monks within ten miles round, and made public confession of his iniquities, vowing that if Queen Berengaria would forgive him, he would send for her, and never forsake her again. When he recovered, these good resolutions were strengthened by an interview he had with an English bishop.

While Richard was parted from the queen, he quarrelled with the virtuous St. Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, on the old ground of exacting a simoniacal tribute on the installation of the prelate into his see. Willing to evade the direct charge of selling the see, King Richard intimated that a present of a fur mantle worth a thousand marks might be the composition. St. Hugh said he was no judge of such gauds, and therefore sent the king a thousand marks, declaring, if he would devour the revenue devoted to the poor, he must have his wilful way. But as soon as Richard had pocketed the money, he sent for the fur mantle. St. Hugh set out for Normandy, to remonstrate with the king on this double extortion. His friends anticipated that he would be killed; but St. Hugh said, "I fear him not," and boldly entered the chapel where Richard was at mass, when the following scene took place.

"Give me the embrace of peace, my son," said St. Hugh.

"That you have not deserved," replied the king.

"Indeed I have," said St. Hugh, "for I have made a long journey on purpose to see my son."

So saying, he took hold of the king's sleeve, and

drew him on one side. Richard smiled, and embraced the old man. They withdrew to the recess behind the altar, and sat down.

"In what state is your conscience?" asked the bishop.

"Very easy," said the king.

"How can that be, my son," said the bishop, "when you live apart from your virtuous queen, and are faithless to her—when you devour the provision of the poor, and load your people with heavy exactions? Are these light transgressions, my son?"

The king owned his faults, and promised amendment; and when he related this conversation to his courtiers, he added:

"Were all our prelates like Hugh of Lincoln, both king and barons must submit to their righteous rebukes!"[1]

Whether the interview with St. Hugh took place before or after the king's alarming illness, we have no data to declare; but as Richard was evidently in a tamer state when St. Hugh visited him, than when he lawlessly demanded the fur mantle, we think the good bishop must have arrived opportunely, just as Richard was beginning to forget his sick-bed vows, without quite relapsing into his original recklessness.

The final restoration of Berengaria to the affections of her royal husband took place a few months after, when Richard proceeded to Poictiers,[2] where he was reconciled to his queen, and kept Christmas and the new year of 1196 in that city with princely state and hospitality. It was a year of great scarcity and famine, and the beneficent queen exerted her restored influence over the heart of the king, by persuading him to give

[1] Berrington.

[2] Rigord, French Chron.

all his superfluous money in bountiful alms to the poor, and through her goodness many were kept from perishing. From that time Queen Berengaria and King Richard were never parted. She found it best to accompany him in all his campaigns, and we find her with him at the hour of his death.

Higden, in the Polychronichon, gives this testimony to the love that Berengaria bore to Richard: "The king took home to him his queen Berengaria, whose society he had for a long time neglected, though she were a royal, eloquent, and beauteous lady, and for his love had ventured with him through the world."

The same year the king, despairing of heirs by his consort, sent for young Arthur duke of Bretagne, that the boy might be educated at his court as future king of England. His mother Constance, out of enmity to Queen Eleanora, unwisely refused this request, and she finished her folly by declaring for the king of France, then waging a fierce war against Richard. This step cost her hapless child his inheritance, and finally his life. From this time Richard acknowledged his brother John as his heir.

The remaining three years of Richard's life were spent in petty provincial wars with the king of France. In one of his treaties, the Princess Alice was at last surrendered to her brother, who gave her, with a tarnished reputation, and the dowry of the county of Ponthieu, in marriage to the count of Aumerle, when she had arrived at her thirty-fifth year.

After the reconciliation between Richard and Berengaria, the royal revenues arising from the tin-mines in Cornwall[1] and Devon, valued at two thousand marks per annum, were confirmed to the queen for her dower

[1] Rymer's Fœdera.

Her continental dower was the city of Bigorre in Aquitaine, and the whole county of Mans.

It was the lively imagination of Richard, heated by the splendid fictions of Arabian romance, that hurried him to his end. A report was brought to him that a peasant ploughing in the fields of Vidomar, lord of Chaluz in Aquitaine, had struck upon a trap-door which concealed an enchanted treasure,[1] and going down into a cave discovered several golden statues with vases full of diamonds, all of which had been secured in the castle of Chaluz, for the private use of the Sieur de Vidomar. Richard, when he heard this fine tale, sent to Vidomar, demanding, as sovereign of the country, his share of the golden statues. The poor castellan declared that no such treasure had been found; nothing but a pot of Roman coins had been discovered, and those he was welcome to have.

As Richard had set his mind on golden statues and vases of diamonds, and had thriven so well when he demanded the golden furniture from King Tancred, it was not probable he could lower his ideas to the reality stated by the unfortunate lord of Vidomar. Accordingly he marched to besiege the castle of Chaluz, sending word to Vidomar either to deliver the statues, or abide the storming of the castle. To this siege Queen Berengaria accompanied the king. Here Richard met his death, being pierced from the walls by an arrow from an arbalista, or cross-bow, aimed by the hand of Bertrand de Gordon.[2] It was the unskilfulness of the surgeon, who mangled the king's shoulder in cutting out the arrow, joined to Richard's

[1] Brompton. Newbury. Hemmingford and Wilkes.

[2] We find the name of Gordon among the inflammatory sirventes of Bertrand de Born.

own wilfulness in neglecting the regimen of his physicians, that caused the mortification of a trifling wound, and occasioned the death of a hero, who to many faults joined a redeeming generosity that showed itself in his last moments. After enduring great agony from his wound, as he drew near to death, the castle of Chaluz was taken. He caused Bertrand de Gordon to be brought before him, and telling him he was dying, asked him whether he had discharged the fatal arrow with the intention of slaying him.

"Yes, tyrant," replied Gordon; "for to you I owe the deaths of my father and my brother, and my first wish was to be revenged on you."

Notwithstanding the boldness of this avowal, the dying king commanded Gordon to be set at liberty, and it was not his fault that his detestable mercenary general, the Fleming, Marcade, caused him to be put to a cruel death.

Richard's death took place April 6th, 1199; his queen unquestionably was with him when he died.[1] She corroborated the testimony that he left his dominions and two-thirds of his treasures to his brother John.

Richard appears to have borne some personal resemblance to his great uncle, William Rufus. Like him, his hair and complexion were warm in colour, and his eyes blue and fiercely sparkling. Like Rufus, his strength was prodigious, but he had the advantage of a tall majestic figure.[2] There are some points of resemblance in character between Richard and his collateral ancestor, though Richard must be considered a more learned and elegant prince, and susceptible, withal, of more frequent impulses of generosity and

[1] See Hemmingford. [2] Vinisauf.

penitence. They both seem to have excelled in the same species of wit and lively repartee.

At the time of King Richard's death, Matthew Paris declares Queen Eleanora his mother was governing England, "where," adds that historian, "she was exceedingly respected and beloved."

Before the body of Cœur de Lion was committed to the grave, an additional load of anguish assailed the heart of his royal widow, through the calamities that befel Joanna, her friend, and Richard's favourite sister. The persecution on account of religion that afterwards visited Joanna's gallant son, in the well-known war against the Albigenses, had already attacked his father incipiently. Owing to the secret agitations of the Catholic clergy, the barons of Toulouse were in arms against the gallant Raymond. Queen Joanna, though in a state little consistent with such exertions, flew to arms for the relief of her adored lord. We translate the following mournful passage from Guillaume de Puy-Laurens:[1] "Queen Joanna was a woman of great courage, and was highly sensitive to the injuries of her husband. She laid siege to the castle of Casser, but, owing to the treachery of her attendants, her camp was fired: she escaped with difficulty from the burning tents, much scorched and hurt. Unsubdued by this accident, she hastened to lay her wrongs before her beloved brother King Richard. She found he had just expired as she arrived. The pains of premature childbirth seized her as she heard the dire intelligence, and she sank under the double affliction of mental and corporeal agony. With her last breath she begged to be laid near her brother Richard." To Berengaria the request was made, and the cold

[1] Guizot's Chronicles, vol. xv. p. 219.

remains of the royal brother and sister, the dearest objects of the sorrowing queen's affections, were laid, by her pious care, side by side in the stately abbey of Fontevraud.[1]

The death of Joanna was immediately succeeded by that of Berengaria's only sister Blanche. This princess had been given in marriage by Cœur de Lion to his nephew and friend, the troubadour-prince, Thibaut of Champagne. The Princess Blanche died the day after the birth of a son, who afterwards was the heir both of Sancho and Berengaria, and finally King of Navarre. Thus in the course of a few short weeks was the queen of England bereft of all that were near and dear to her; the world had become a desert to Berengaria before she left it for a life of conventual seclusion.

Queen Berengaria fixed her residence at Mans in the Orleannois, where she held a great part of her foreign dower. Here she founded the noble Abbey of L'Espan.

Once Queen Berengaria left her widowed retirement, when she met her brother-in-law King John and his fair young bride at Chinon, her husband's treasure city. Here she compounded with the English monarch, for the dower she held in England, for two thousand marks per annum, to be paid half-yearly. After being entertained with royal magnificence, and receiving every mark of respect from the English court, the royal widow bade farewell to public splendour, and retired to conventual seclusion, and the practice of constant charity. But no sooner was John fixed firmly

[1] The description of Richard's statue has been given by Miss L. S. Costello in her recent charming work, entitled "The Boccages and the Vines." It coincides well with the descriptions we have given of his person from his contemporary Vinisauf.

on the English throne, than he began to neglect the payment of the dower for which his sister-in-law had compounded; and in 1206 there appears in the Fœdera a passport for the queen-dowager to come to England for the purpose of conferring with King John; but there exists no authority whereby we can prove that she arrived in this country.

The records of 1209 present a most elaborate epistle from Pope Innocent, setting forth the wrongs and wants of his dear daughter in Christ, Berengaria, who, he says, had appealed to him "with floods of tears streaming down her cheeks, and with audible cries,"—which we trust were flowers of rhetoric of the pope's secretary.[1] As Pope Innocent threatens John with an interdict, it is pretty certain that the wrongs of Berengaria formed a clause in the subsequent excommunication of the felon king.

In 1214, when the excommunication was taken off, there exists a letter from John to his dear sister, the illustrious Berengaria, praying that the pope's nuncio might arbitrate what was due to her. The next year brings a piteous letter from King John, praying that his dearly beloved sister will excuse his delay of payment, seeing the "greatness of his adversity by reason of the wickedness of his magnates and barons," who had invited Prince Louis of France to spoil her estates; "but when," says King John, "these clouds that have overcast our serenity shall disperse, and our kingdom be full of joyful tranquillity, then the pecuniary debt owed to our dear sister shall be paid joyfully and thankfully."

This precious epistle was penned July 8th, 1216, by John, but he died the succeeding October, and Berengaria's debt was added to the vast sum of his other

[1] Rymer, Fœdera, vol. i. p. 152.

trespasses; for "joyful tranquillity" never came for him, nor of course her time of payment.

In the reign of Henry III., Berengaria had again to require the pope's assistance for the payment of her annuity; her arrears at that time amounted to 4040*l.* sterling; but the templars became guarantees and agents for her payments; and from that time the pecuniary troubles of Berengaria cease to form a feature in our national records.

The date of Berengaria's death has generally been fixed about the year 1230, but that was only the year of the completion of her Abbey of Espan, and of her final retirement from the world, as from that time she took up her abode within its walls, and finished there her blameless life, at an advanced age, some years afterwards.

Berengaria was interred in her own stately abbey. The following most interesting particulars of her monument we transcribe from the noble work of the late Mr. Stothard, edited by his accomplished widow, Mrs. Bray.

"When Mr. Stothard visited the Abbey of L'Espan, near Mans, in search of the effigy of Berengaria, he found the church converted into a barn, and the object of his inquiry in a mutilated state, concealed under a quantity of wheat. It was in excellent preservation, with the exception of the left arm. By the effigy were lying the bones of the queen, the silent witnesses of the sacrilegious demolition of the tomb. After some search, a portion of the arm belonging to the statue was recovered." Three men who had assisted in the work of destruction stated "that the monument with the figure upon it stood in the centre of the aisle, at the east end of the church; that there was no coffin within it, but a small square box, containing bones,

pieces of linen, some stuff embroidered with gold, and a slate, on which was found an inscription." The slate was found in possession of a canon of the church of St. Julien, at Mans: upon it was engraven an inscription, of which the following is a translation: —

"The tomb of the most serene Berengaria, queen of England, the noble founder of this monastery, was restored and removed to this more sacred place. In it were deposited the bones which were found in the ancient sepulchre, on the 27th May, in the year of our Lord 1672."

The sides of the tomb are ornamented with deep quatrefoils. The effigy which was upon it is in high relief. It represents the queen with her hair unconfined, but partly concealed by the coverchief, over which is placed an elegant crown. Her mantle is fastened by a narrow band crossing her breast; a large fermail, or brooch, richly set with stones, confines her tunic at the neck. To an ornamental girdle, which encircles her waist, is attached a small aumoniere or purse. This greatly resembles a modern reticule, with a chain and clasped top. "The queen holds in her hands a box, singular from the circumstance of its having embossed on the cover a second representation of herself, as lying on a bier, with waxen torches burning in candlesticks on either side of her."

From early youth to her grave, Berengaria manifested devoted love for Richard; uncomplaining when deserted by him, forgiving when he returned, and faithful to his memory unto death. The royal Berengaria, Queen *of* England, though never *in* England, little deserves to be forgotten by any admirer of feminine and conjugal virtue.

ISABELLA OF ANGOULEME,

QUEEN OF ENGLAND, CONSORT OF KING JOHN.

Isabella the betrothed of Hugh de Lusignan—Parents—Inheritance—Isabella abducted by King John—Marriage to King John—Challenge of Count Hugh—Queen's arrival in England—Recognition—Coronation—Arrival at Rouen—Luxury—Conclusion of Memoir of Eleanora of Aquitaine—Besieged—Relieved by King John—He captures Count Hugh—Death of Eleanora—Effigy—Character—Queen Isabella's dower—Her return to England—Her lover, Count Hugh, liberated—Isabella's son born—Her pages—Herd of white cows—King John's cruelty—His jealousy—Her children—Inheritance—Marriage of Count Hugh to Isabella's little daughter—Royal dress—Murder of Matilda the Fair—John's atrocities—Meets the queen at Marlborough—She retires to Gloucester with her children—John's death—Queen's proceedings—Coronation of her son—She leaves England—Marries Count Hugh—Deprived of her jointure—Detains the Princess Joanna—Queen's dower restored—Her pride—Embroils her husband in war—Attempts the life of St. Louis—Humiliation of Isabella—Hated by the Poictevins—Called Jezebel—Retires to Fontevraud—Takes the veil—Dies—Tomb—Effigy—Children of second marriage.

No one would have imagined that Isabella of Angoulême was destined to become the future queen of England when King John ascended the throne; for she was then not only the engaged wife of another, but, according to the custom of the times, had been actually consigned to her betrothed for the purpose of education.

Hugh de Lusignan, surnamed Le Brun,[1] was the affianced lord of Isabella. He was eldest son of Hugh IX., the reigning Count de la Marche, who governed the provinces which formed the northern boundary of the Aquitanian dominions, called in that age French Poitou. He was a vassal prince of the French crown, and, by virtue of his authority as marcher or guardian of the border, was a most formidable neighbour to the Aquitanian territories; for, if offended, he could at pleasure raise the *ban* and *arrière ban*, and pour on them the whole feudal militia of a large portion of France.

The mother of King John was deeply impressed with the necessity of conciliating this powerful neighbour. She had been forced, at the death of Richard, to do homage at Tours,[2] in person, to Philip Augustus for Poitou, 1199, and by her wise mediation she reconciled John and Philip, negotiating an alliance between Prince Louis and her granddaughter, Blanche of Castille. She even travelled to Spain, and was present at the splendid marriage of her granddaughter, who was wedded at Burgos to Prince Louis by procuration. Afterwards her daughter, the queen of Spain, accompanied her across the Pyrenees with the young bride, to her native territories of Guienne. Queen Eleanora intended to escort Blanche to Normandy, where Prince Louis waited for them,[3] but she fell sick with fatigue, and retreated to Fontevraud, towards the close of the year 1199. In a letter written by her on her recovery, she informs King John "that she had been very ill,

[1] "Hugh," says G. de Nangis, "whom the people of the little town of Limoges *would* call the Brown, was a noble personage, brave, powerful, and possessing great riches." He did not own the *sobriquet* of Le Brun, but signs himself Lusignan in his charters.

[2] Guillaume de Nangis. [3] Mezerai, Vol. ii. 215, 216.

but that she had sent for her favourite cousin, Americus de Thouars, from Poitou; that she was much comforted by his presence, and through God's grace she was convalescent." Queen Eleanora then proceeds to urge her son to visit immediately his Poictevin provinces, and, for the sake of their peace and preservation, she desires him to form an amicable league with the Count de la Marche.[1]

This epistle is dated Fontevraud, 1200, and was the occasion of King John's progress to Aquitaine in the summer; but little did the writer suppose that before the year was expired, the whole powerful family of Lusignan would be exasperated, by king John's lawless appropriation of the bride wedded to the heir of their house.[2]

Isabella was the only child and heiress of Aymer or Americus, Count of Angoulême, surnamed Taillefer. By maternal descent she shared the blood of the Capetian sovereigns, her mother, Alice de Courtenay, being the daughter of Peter de Courtenay, fifth son of Louis VI. king of France. The inheritance of Isabella was a beautiful province, called the Angoumois, situated in the very heart of the Aquitanian domains; with Perigord on the south, Poitou on the north, Saintonge on the west, and La Limousin on the east. The Angoumois, watered by the clear and sparkling Charente, abounded in all the richest aliments of life; altogether

[1] Fœdera, vol. i. The Latin letter of the aged queen is preceded by another from Americus, urging the same advice, and giving an account of the health of his royal kinswoman. The conclusion of the life of Eleanora of Aquitaine is comprised in this memoir.

[2] Hugh IX., according to all genealogies, was alive long after his son's betrothment to Isabella. The bereft lover of Isabella succeeded his father by the title of Hugh X. There were thirteen counts of this house successively of the name of Hugh; a fact which makes their identity difficult without close investigation.

it was fair and desirable as its heiress. The Provençal language was at that era spoken throughout the district; Isabella of Angoulême may therefore be reckoned the third of our Provençal queens. The province to which she was heiress, had been governed by her ancestors ever since the reign of Charles the Bald.

Isabella was actually abiding at one of the castles of her betrothed,[1] when her parents sent for her to be present at a day of high ceremonial, on which they paid their homage to King John for the province of Angoumois. Indeed, it may be considered certain that the young lady herself, as their sole heir, was required to pay her personal homage to her lord paramount as Duke of Aquitaine. Her betrothed was absent, but his brother surrendered the fair heiress at the request of her parents. He was deceived[2] by the message of the Count of Angoulême; indeed, who could deny the parents the pleasure of occasionally enjoying the society of their child?

It was at the high festival of King John's recognition in Angoulême, as sovereign of Aquitaine, that the English king first saw the beautiful fiancée of Lusignan. He was thirty-two—she had just entered her fifteenth year; notwithstanding which disparity, he became madly enamoured of her. The parents of Isabella, when they perceived their sovereign thus captivated with her budding charms, dishonourably encouraged his passion, and by deceitful excuses to the Count of Eu prevented the return of Isabella to the castle of Valence; a proceeding the more infamous, since subsequent events plainly showed that the heart of the maiden secretly preferred her betrothed.

[1] William le Breton. Dr. Henry asserts the same, and gives Hovedon and M. Paris as authorities.

[2] See the Chronicle of William le Breton. Guizot's French Collection.

Had John Plantagenet remained in the same state of poverty as when his father surnamed him Lackland, the fierce Hugh de Lusignan might have retained his beautiful bride; but at the time his fancy was captivated by Isabella, her parents saw him universally recognised as the possessor of the first empire in Europe. They had just done homage to him as the monarch of the south of France, and they knew he had received the elective suffrages of the English people, in preference to the hereditary right of his nephew Arthur; that he had been actually crowned king of England, and his brow had been circled with the chaplet of golden roses which formed the ducal coronet of Normandy.

John was already married to a lady who had neither been crowned with him, nor acknowledged queen of England; yet she appears to have been the bride of his fickle choice. The son of his great uncle, Robert Earl of Gloucester,[1] had left three daughters, co-heiresses of his vast possessions. The youth and beauty of Avisa, the youngest of the sisters, induced Prince John to woo her as his wife. The wedding took place at Richard's coronation, but the church forbade the pair to live together.[2]

The pope, who had previously commanded the divorce of Avisa from John, because the Empress Matilda and Robert Earl of Gloucester had been half brother and sister, now murmured at the broken contract between Isabella and the heir of Lusignan; but as this betrothment does not seem to have been accompanied by any vow or promise on the part of the bride, his opposition was vain.

The Lady Isabella, as much dazzled as her parents

[1] Tyrrell.

[2] It must be noticed that the church forbade the wedlock of cousins of illegitimate descent, as stricly as those by marriage.

by the splendour of the triple crowns of England, Normandy, and Aquitaine, would not acknowledge that she had consented to any marriage contract with Count Hugh. As Isabella preferred being a queen to giving her hand to the man she really loved, no one could right the wrongs of the ill-treated Lusignan. Moreover, the mysterious chain of feudality interwove its inextricable links and meshes even round the sacrament of marriage. King John, as lord paramount of Aquitaine, could have rendered invalid any wedlock that the heiress of the Angoumois might contract without his consent; he could have forbidden his fair vassaless to marry the subject of King Philip, and if she had remained firmly true to her first love, he could have declared her fief forfeited for disobedience to her immediate lord.[1]

King John and Isabella were married at Bordeaux, some time in the month of August, 1200. Their hands were united by the archbishop of Bordeaux, who had previously held a synod, assisted by the bishop of Poitou, and solemnly declared that no impediment existed to the marriage.

This event threw Count Hugh of Lusignan into despair; he did not, however, quietly submit to the destruction of his hopes, but challenged the royal interloper between him and his betrothed to mortal combat.[2] John received the cartel with remarkable coolness, saying, that if Count Hugh wished for combat, he would appoint a champion to fight with him; but the count declared that John's champions were hired bravos and vile mercenaries, unfit for the encounter of

[1] See Bracton. "By the feudal law, any woman who is an heir forfeits her lands if she marries without her lord's consent."

[2] Speed's Chronicle.

a wronged lover and true knight. Thus, unable to obtain satisfaction, the valiant Marcher waited his hour of revenge; while King John sailed with his bride in triumph to England, where he was anxious that she should be recognised as his wife, not only by the peers, but by the people.

For this purpose, being just then on his best behaviour, he called what the chroniclers term "a common council of the kingdom" at Westminster. The ancient Wittena-gemot seems the model of this assembly. Here the young Isabella was introduced, and acknowledged as the queen-consort of England. Her coronation was appointed for the 8th of October, and there exists a charter in the Tower, expressing "that Isabella of Angoulême was crowned queen by the common consent of the barons, clergy, and people of England."[1] She was crowned on that day by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Clement Fitz-William was paid thirty-three shillings for strewing Westminster Hall with herbs and rushes, against the coronation of lady Isabella the queen; and the chamberlains of the Norman exchequer were ordered to pay Eustace the chaplain, and Ambrose the songster, twenty-five shillings for singing the hymn *Christus vicit* at the unction and crowning of the said lady queen.[2] The expenses of her dress at this time were by no means extravagant; three cloaks of fine linen, one of scarlet cloth, and one gray pelisse, costing together twelve pounds five and fourpence, were all that was afforded to the fair Provençal bride on this august occasion.

The whole of the intervening months between October and Easter were spent by the king and queen in

[1] Roger Hoveden. [2] Madox.

a continual round of feasting and voluptuousness. At the Easter festival of 1201, they were the guests of Archbishop Hubert, at Canterbury,[1] where they were once more crowned,[2] or rather, they wore their crowns according to the ancient English custom at this high festival; it being the office of the primate of England always to place them on the heads of the king and queen on such occasions, when he was abiding in the vicinity of royalty.

Wars and rumours of wars awoke the beautiful Isabella and King John from their dream of pleasure. The Duchess Constance of Bretagne had eloped from her husband, the Earl of Chester, and married a valiant Poictevin, Sir Guy of Thouars,[3] who showed every demonstration of successfully asserting the claims of his son-in-law, young Arthur Plantagenet, for whose cause Anjou and Maine had already declared. Added to this alarming intelligence, was the news that Lusignan and his brother, the Count of Eu, were conspiring with the family of Bretagne, and raising insurrections in Poitou to avenge the abduction of Isabella of Angoulême.

These troubles caused Isabella and her husband to embark at Portsmouth for Normandy. King John sailed in a separate galley from the queen, and in stress of weather ran for the Isle of Wight, a place of retirement where John often abode for months together. The queen's ship was in the greatest distress, but at last made the fort of Barfleur, where King John found Isabella waiting his arrival.

The conspiracy, of which the disappointed lover of

[1] Tyrrell. [2] Hoveden.

[3] Argentre, Breton Hist. The disconsolate widowhood of Constance exists only in the pages of fiction.

Isabella was the mover, was somewhat retarded by the death of the Duchess Constance[1] of Bretagne, in 1201, soon after the birth of her third child, the Princess Alice, who was finally the heiress of the duchy.

King John, regardless of the tempest that still muttered around him, established himself at Rouen, and gave way to a career of indolent voluptuousness, little in accordance with the restless activity of his warlike nobility. In that era, when five in the morning was the established breakfast-time, and half-past ten in the forenoon the orthodox dinner-hour, for all ranks and conditions of men, the court were scandalized at finding that King John never left his pillow before mid-day, at which time his barons saw him, with contempt, issuing from the chamber of the fair Isabella.[2] This mode of life made him far more unpopular, in the thirteenth century, than the perpetration of a few more murders and abductions, like those with which his memory stands already charged. His young queen shared some of this blame, as the enchantress who kept him chained in her bowers of luxury. The royal pair paid, however, some attention to the fine arts, for the magnificent mosaic pavement of the palace of Rouen was laid down while the queen kept her court there.[3]

Eleanora of Aquitaine, now advancing into her eightieth year, still acted a queenly part on the arena of Europe. After resigning her vice-regency of England[4] into the hands of King John, she had assumed the sceptre of her native dominions, and was then governing Aquitaine, residing with a peace establishment,

[1] Argentre.
[2] Hoveden and M. Paris.
[3] Ducarel.
[4] She would not recognise Arthur as the rightful heir, for fear Constance should govern England during his minority.

in perfect security, at her summer castle of Mirabel in Poitou; when Count Hugh de Lusignan, joining his forces with those of young Arthur of Bretagne, suddenly laid siege to the residence of the aged queen. This was a plan of Count Hugh's devising, who meant, if Eleanora had been captured, to have exchanged her for his lost spouse. But Eleanora, after they had stormed the town, betook herself to the citadel of Mirabel from whose lofty heights she scoffed at their efforts; she sent to her son for speedy aid, and with a slight garrison and scanty provisions held out heroically till his arrival.

Once, and once only, did the recreant John prove himself of "the right stem of great Plantagenet." When he heard of his mother's danger, he traversed France with lightning speed, and arriving unexpectedly before Mirabel, his forces hemmed in Count Hugh and Duke Arthur between the town and citadel. His enemies had reckoned on his character as a sluggard and *fainéant* knight, but they reckoned in vain; he gave them fierce battle on his arrival, and overthrew them with an utter defeat, taking prisoners his rival in love, Count Hugh, and his rival in empire, Duke Arthur, together with four-and-twenty of the principal barons of Poitou, who had risen for the right of young Arthur, or were allies of the Count. Ralph of Coggeshall and Matthew Paris declare that Queen Eleanora charged her son, on her malediction, not to harm the noble boy whom he had made his prisoner. While the queen-mother retained her faculties, John contented himself with incarcerating Arthur in the citadel of Falaise; but he insulted Count Hugh, the unfortunate lover of his queen, with every species of personal indignity, carrying him and the insurgent barons of Poitou after him

wherever he went, "chained hand and foot in tumbril carts drawn by oxen." "A mode of travelling," says a Provençal chronicler, very pathetically, "to which they were not accustomed." In this manner he dragged them after him till they all embarked with him for England.[1]

Queen Isabella must have exerted her utmost influence to save the unfortunate Lusignan from the fate of his fellow-prisoners, for two-and-twenty Poictevin lords, who had been exhibited with Count Hugh in the carts, were starved to death in the dungeons of Corfe Castle by the orders of King John.[2] The lover of Isabella, positively refusing any submission to the abductor of his bride, was consigned to a weary confinement in the donjon of Bristol Castle at the same time with John's other hapless prisoner, Eleanor, the sister of Arthur, surnamed the Pearl of Brittany.[3]

Isabella of Angoulême had not borne an heir to John when Arthur was cut off in 1202; therefore, after John had destroyed this promising scion of Plantagenet, the sole representative of that heroic line was his dishonoured self.[4] The decision of the twelve peers of

[1] Matthew Paris details this incident nearly in similar words.

[2] Hoveden and Dr. Henry.

[3] There is reason to suppose that this unfortunate lady, on whom the lineal right of the English crown devolved, took the vows after a long imprisonment. From a bundle of charters belonging to the abbey of Fontevraud examined by Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart., it is evident that Eleanora of Bretagne was appointed by the Abbess of Fontevraud, Superior of the nunnery of Ambresbury. All known hitherto of the sister of Arthur was that she died in 1235, and was buried at Ambresbury.

[4] It is in an allusion to this fact that Le Breton, in his beautiful description of Arthur's death, (which, with other rich though irrelevant matter, we are forced to exclude,) makes Arthur exclaim, when pleading passionately for his life, "Ah, my uncle, spare the son of thy brother—spare thy young nephew—spare thy *race!*"

France, convened to inquire into the fate of Arthur, declared Normandy forfeited by King John in 1203. The demise of Queen Eleanora, his mother, took place the year after: she lived to mourn over the dismemberment of the continental possessions of her family. Paulus Emilius, in his Life of Philip Augustus, declares the queen-mother interceded strenuously for Arthur, and died of sorrow when she found the depths of guilt into which John had plunged.

The annals of the monks of Fontevraud testify that Queen Eleanora took the veil of their order in the year 1202, and that she died in the year 1204, having been for many months wholly dead to the world.

Her last charter is given to the men of Oleron,[1] soon after the demise of her son Richard I. In this document she confirms the privileges of this great maritime guild or fraternity.

Adversity evidently improved the character of Eleanora of Aquitaine; and after the violent passions of

[1] Eleanora of Aquitaine, at that era the greatest naval potentate in the world, is seen in this charter to exercise full sovereignty over these merchant islanders. "To the beloved and faithful marines of Oleron," says Eleanora, "we confirm the former grants of that venerable and illustrious man, our Lord Henry King of England, with whom we contracted our matrimony, on condition that the islanders of Oleron keep faith with our heirs." She names not King John as such, but this charter is followed by another from him, "confirming, for the future, all that our dearest and most venerable mother has granted during her life." Nor is this forgotten charter without a deep and vital interest to our country, for the distant Isle of Oleron was the source of our maritime laws, and the cradle of our infant commerce. —(*Fœdera, vol. i.*)—To one of her charters preserved in the Fontevraud collection in the Bibliothèque Royale, examined by Sir T. Phillipps, is appended her seal, representing her figure at full length, standing with a fleur-de-lis in her right hand; she holds in the left a globe, symbol of sovereignty, on which is a bird standing on a cross. The charter itself is a great curiosity, granting certain lands, annual value 40*s.*, to Adam Cook, and Joan his wife, on condition of their paying her every year one pound of cinnamon.—Adam was possibly her cook.

her youth had been corrected by sorrow and experience, her life exhibits many traces of a great ruler and magnanimous sovereign. A good moral education would have rendered Eleanora of Aquitaine one of the greatest characters of her time; she had been reared in her sunny fatherland as the gay votaress of pleasure; her intellectual cultivation had been considerable, but its sole end was to enhance the delights of a voluptuous life, by calling into activity all the powers of a poetic mind. Slowly and surely she learned the stern lesson of life, that power, beauty, and royalty, are but vanity, if not linked with moral excellence: she learned it too late, for the thorns her own reckless hand had planted, rankled in her path to the latest hour of her existence.

She was buried by the side of Henry II. at Fontevraud, where her tomb was to be seen, with its recumbent statue, till the French revolution. The face of this effigy is beautifully worked with strokes of the pencil like miniature; the features are noble and intellectual. Eleanora wears the gorget, wimple, and coverchef; over this head-gear is a regal diadem; the royal mantle is folded gracefully round her waist; it is of garter blue, figured with silver crescents. A book was once held in the hands clasped on the breast, but both hands and book are now broken away.[1]

With his mother King John lost all fear and shame. Distinct as his character stands on a bad eminence, the reader of general history knows little of the atrocity of this man, whose wickedness was of the active and impetuous quality sometimes seen in the natives of the

[1] Her beautiful statue is still preserved, thanks to the research and zeal of our lamented antiquarian Stothard.

[2] Montfaucon's engraving gives the hands and book.

south of Europe, combined with the most prominent defects of the English disposition. He exhibits the traits of the depraved Provençal, whose civilisation had at that era degenerated to corruption, joined to the brutality of his worst English subjects, then in a semi-barbarous state. Isabella's influence did not mend his manners; he became notoriously worse after his union with her.

Ignorance could not be pleaded as an excuse for John's enormities; like all the sons of Eleanora of Aquitaine, he had literary tastes. Some items in his close rolls prove the fact, that king John read books of a high character. His mandate to Reginald de Cornhill requires him to send to Windsor the Romance of the History of England.[1] The Abbot of Reading supplied his sovereign with the Old Testament; Hugh St. Victor on the Sacraments; The Sentences of Petre Lombard; The Epistles of St. Austin; Origen's Treatise; and Arian; the Abbot likewise acknowledges that he has a book belonging to the king called 'Pliny.'[2]

After the dower lands of the English queens had been left free by the death of the queen-mother, and the composition of Berengaria, King John endowed his wife most richly with many towns in the west of England, besides Exeter and the tin-mines of Cornwall and Devonshire. The jointure palace of the heiress of Angoulême was that ancient residence of the Conqueror, the Castle of Berkhampstead, in Hertfordshire.

Queen Isabella accompanied her dishonoured lord to England, December 6, 1203. As Aquitaine, since the captivity of Count Hugh de Lusignan, had been

[1] April 29, 1205. See Excerpta Historica, 393.

[2] Ibid3 399

in a state of revolt, John was forced to reside in England until he made some attempt to subdue Poitou in 1206. Having set at liberty the queen's unfortunate lover, Hugh de Lusignan, and entered into a pacific treaty with him, he embarked with him, and they soon after landed at Rochelle. By the influence of Lusignan, the principal part of the South of France again owned the sway of the line of the Plantagenet.

Queen Isabella, during the king's absence, brought him an heir at Winchester, who received the name of Henry. After his return to England, King John began utterly to disregard all the ancient laws of his kingdom; and when the barons murmured, he required from them the surrender of their children as hostages. In the Tower rolls exist documents proving that those young nobles were appointed to wait on his queen[1] at Windsor and Winchester, where they attended her in bands, serving her at meals, and following her at cavalcades and processions.

The tragedy of the unfortunate family of de Braose was occasioned by the resistance of the parents to these ordinances in 1211. King John had demanded the eldest son of William de Braose, lord of Bramber in Sussex, as a page to wait on Queen Isabella, meaning him in reality as a hostage for his father's allegiance. When the king's message was delivered at Bramber by a courtier who bore the ominous name of Mauluc,[2] the imprudent Lady de Braose declared in his

[1] Two of these hostage children, Elizabeth heiress of Sir Ralph Deincourt of Sizergh Castle in Westmoreland, and Walter the heir of Sir Thomas Strickland of Strickland, formed an attachment for each other at the court of Isabella, and afterwards married.

[2] Peter de Mauluc was said to be the assistant of John in the murder of Arthur; hence the taunt of the Lady de Braose. (Speed.) She was a Norman Baroness, Matilda St. Valery.

hearing, "that she would not surrender her children to a king who had murdered his own nephew." The words of the unfortunate mother were duly reported by the malicious messenger. The Lady de Braose repented of her rashness when it was too late, and strove in vain to propitiate Queen Isabella by rich gifts. Among other offerings, she sent the queen a present of a herd of four hundred cows and one beautiful bull: this peerless herd was white as milk, all but the ears, which were red.[1]

This strange present to Isabella did not avert the deadly wrath of King John; for he seized the unfortunate family at Meath in Ireland, whither they had fled for safety. The lord of Bramber, his wife and children, were conveyed to the old castle at Windsor, and enclosed in a strong room, where they were deliberately starved to death. Father, mother, and five innocent little ones, suffered in our England the fate of Count Ugolino and his family; an atrocity compared with which the dark stain of Arthur's murder fades to the hue of a venial crime.

The passion of John for his queen, though it was sufficiently strong to embroil him in war, was not exclusive enough to secure conjugal fidelity; the king tormented her with jealousy, while on his part he was far from setting her a good example, for he often invaded the honour of the female nobility. The name of the lover of Isabella has never been ascertained, nor is it clear that she was ever guilty of any dereliction from rectitude. But John revenged the wrong that, perhaps, only existed in his malignant imagination, in a manner peculiar to himself. He made his mercena-

[1] An ancient Flemish chronicle cited by Speed and Holing.

ries assassinate the person whom he suspected of supplanting him in his queen's affections, with two others supposed to be accomplices, and secretly hung their bodies over the bed of Isabella.[1] Her surprise and terror when she discovered them may be imagined, though it is not described by the monastic writers who darkly allude to this dreadful scene.

After this awful tragedy, the queen was consigned to captivity, being conveyed to Gloucester Abbey under the ward of one of her husband's German mercenaries. In a record-roll of King John, he directs Theodoric de Tyes "to go to Gloucester with our lady queen, and there keep her in the chamber where the Princess Joanna had been nursed, till he heard further from him." Joanna was born in 1210, according to the majority of the chroniclers. The queen's disgrace was about two years after the birth of her daughter.

The queen had brought John a lovely family, but the birth of his children failed to secure her against harsh treatment: she was at this time the mother of two sons, and a daughter.[2] Isabella inherited the province of the Angoumois in the year 1213, at which time it is probable that a reconciliation took place between the queen and her husband, since her mother, the Countess of Angoulême, came to England, and put herself under the protection of John. Soon after he went to Angoulême with Isabella.

To facilitate the restoration of the Poictevin provinces, again seized by Philip Augustus, John found it necessary to form an alliance with his former rival,

[1] See Dr. Lingard, p. 72.

[2] Her second son, Richard, was born 1208, and her daughter Joanna at Gloucester.

[3] Matthew Paris.

Count Hugh de Lusignan. Although that nobleman had been set at liberty some years, he perversely chose to remain a bachelor, in order to remind all the world of the perfidy of that faithless beauty who had broken her betrothment for a crown. The only stipulation which could induce him to assist King John was, that he would give him the eldest daughter of Isabella as a wife in the place of the mother. In compliance with this singular request, the infant Princess Joanna was betrothed to him immediately, and forthwith delivered to him, that she might be educated and brought up in one of his castles, as her mother had been before her.[1] After this alliance, Count Hugh effectually cleared the Poictevin borders of the French invaders; and King John, flushed with his temporary success, returned with his queen to plague England with new acts of tyranny.[2]

Although the most extravagant prince in the world in regard to his own personal expenses, John was parsimonious enough toward his beautiful queen. In one of his wardrobe-rolls there is an order for a gray cloth *pelisson* for Isabella, guarded with nine bars of gray fur. In King John's wardrobe-roll is a warrant[3] for giving out cloth to make two robes for the queen, each to consist of five ells; one of green cloth, the other of brunet. The green robe lined with cendal or sar-

[1] Count Hugh is called the son of Count de la Marche, his father being alive. Fœd., vol. i.

[2] Oct. 20, 1214.

[3] It was not beneath the attention of the English monarch to order the minutest articles of dress for himself and his queen. Indeed, the wardrobe accounts of the sovereigns of the middle ages prove that they kept a royal warehouse of mercery, haberdashery, and linen, from whence their officers measured out velvets, brocade, sarcenets, tissue, gauzes, and trimmings of all sorts!

cenet, is considered worth sixty shillings. The king likewise orders for his queen cloth for a pair of purple sandals, and four pair of women's boots, one pair to be embroidered in circles round the ankles. There is, likewise, an item for the repair for Isabella's mirror.[1] The dress of John was, costly and glittering in the extreme, for he was, in addition to other follies and frailties, the greatest fop in Europe. At one of his Christmas festivals he appeared in a red satin mantle embroidered with sapphires and pearls, a tunic of white damask, a girdle set with garnets and sapphires, while the baldrick that crossed from his left shoulder to sustain his sword, was set with diamonds and emeralds, and his white gloves were adorned, one with a ruby, and the other with a sapphire.[2] The richness of King John's dress, and the splendour of his jewelry, partly occasioned the extravagant demands he made on the purses of his people, both church and laity; he supplied his wants by a degree of corruption that proves him utterly insensible to every feeling of honour, both as a man and a king, and shamelessly left rolls and records whereby posterity were enabled to read such entries as the following ludicrous specimens of bribery.[3]

"Robert de Vaux gave five of his best palfreys, that the king might hold his tongue about Henry Pinel's wife."

What tale of scandal King John had the opportunity of telling, deponent saith not; but the entry looks marvellously undignified in regal accounts, and

[1] Excerpta Historica, p. 398.

[2] Such ornamented gloves are seen on his effigy at Worcester cathedral, and on that of his father at Fontevraud.

[3] Ypo Neustria. Matt. Westminster.

shows that shame as well as honour was dead in the heart of John.

"To the Bishop of Winchester is given one tun of good wine, for *not* putting the king in mind to give a girdle to the Countess of Albemarle."

The scarcity of coin and absence of paper-money made bribery remarkably shameless in those days; palfreys prancing at the levee, and the four hundred milk-white kine of the unfortunate Lady de Braose lowing before the windows of Isabella, must have had an odd effect.[1]

The queen, soon after her return to England in 1214, was superseded in the fickle heart of her husband by the unfortunate beauty of Matilda Fitz-Walter, surnamed the Fair. The abduction of this lady, who, to do her justice, thoroughly abhorred the royal felon, was the exploit which completed the exasperation of the English barons, who flew to arms for the purpose of avenging the honour of the most distinguished among their class, Lord Fitz-Walter, father of the fair victim of John.

Every one knows that, clad in steel, they met their monarch John at Runnymede, and there

"In happy hour
Made the fell tyrant feel his people's power."

The unfortunate Matilda, who had roused the jealousy of the queen, and excited the lawless passion of John, was supposed to be murdered by him in the spring of the year 1215.[2]

[1] It realises the satire of Pope applied to the Walpole ministry. The poet, lauding the convenience of bank notes in such cases, contrasts the clumsy conveyance of tangible property as bribes, saying,

"A hundred oxen at thy levee roar."

[2] "About the year 1215," saith the book of Dunmow, "there arose a

After the signature of Magna Charta, King John retired in a rage to his fortress at Windsor, the scene of many of his secret murders. Here he gave way to tempests of personal fury, resembling his father's bursts of passion; he execrated his birth, and, seizing sticks and clubs, vented his maniacal feelings, by biting and gnawing them, and then breaking them in pieces. While these emotions were raging, mischief matured itself in his soul; for after passing a sleepless night at Windsor, he departed for the Isle of Wight,[1] where he sullenly waited the arrival of some bands of mercenaries he had sent for from Brabant and Guienne, with whose assistance he meant to revenge himself on the barons. In the fair isle John passed whole days idly sauntering on the beach, chatting familiarly with the fishers, and even joining in piratical expeditions with them against his own subjects. He was absent some weeks; every one thought he was lost, and few wished that he might ever be found. He emerged from his concealment in good earnest when his mercenary troops arrived, and then he began

great discord between king John and his barons because of Matilda, surnamed the Fair, daughter of Robert Lord Fitz-Walter, whom the king unlawfully loved, but could not obtain her, nor her father's consent thereto. Whereupon the king banished the said Fitz-Walter, the most valiant knight in England, and caused his castle in London, called Baynard, and all his other dwellings, to be spoiled. Which being done, he sent to Matilda the Fair about his old suit in love, and because she would not agree to his wickedness, the messenger poisoned an egg, and bade her keepers when she was hungry, boil it and give her to eat. She did so, and died." Tradition points out one of the lofty turrets, perched on the top, at the corner of the White Tower of London, as the scene of this murder. She was conveyed there, after the storming of Baynard's castle, in 1213. Like Count Julian, her enraged father brought the French into England to avenge his daughter. Matilda's tomb and effigy are still to be seen in the priory church of Little Dunmow in Essex.—*See Brayley's Graphic Perambulator.*

[1] Barnard's History of England.

that atrocious progress across the island, always alluded to by his contemporaries with horror. One trait of his conduct shall serve for a specimen of the rest—"The king every morning took delight in firing with his own hands the house that had sheltered him the preceding night."

In the midst of this diabolical career he reconciled himself to Isabella, whom he had kept in a state of palace restraint ever since the abduction of Matilda the Fair.[1] The queen advanced as far as Marlborough to meet him, where they abode some days at the royal palace on the forest of Savernake,[2] which was one of the principal dower castles of our queens. At this time there is an intimation on the record-rolls, that the new buildings at the queen's castle on Savernake were completed, among which were kitchens with fireplaces for roasting oxen whole.

John consigned to the care of Isabella, at this time, his heir Prince Henry, with whom she retired to Gloucester, where the rest of the royal children were abiding. The queen had, in the year 1214, become the mother of a second daughter, and in the succeeding year she gave birth to the Princess Isabella.[3]

Scarcely had the queen retreated to the strong city of Gloucester, when that invasion by Prince Louis of France took place, which is so well known in general history. The barons, driven to desperation by John's late outrages, offered the heir of France the crown, if he would aid them against their tormentor.

Hunted into an obscure corner of his kingdom, in the autumn of 1216, King John confided his person and regalia to the men of Lynn in Norfolk. But as

[1] Matthew of Westminster. [2] See Fœdera, in many deeds.
[3] Afterwards married to the Emperor of Germany.

his affairs summoned him northward, he crossed the Wash to Swinshead Abbey in Lincolnshire. The tide coming in unexpectedly, swept away part of his army and his baggage. His splendid regalia was swallowed in the devouring waters, and John himself scarcely escaped with life. The king arrived at Swinshead Abbey unwell and dispirited, and withal in a malignant ill temper. As he sat at meat in the abbot's refectory, he gave vent to his spleen by saying, "that he hoped to make the halfpenny loaf cost a shilling before the year was over." A Saxon monk heard this malicious speech with indignation: if the evidence of contemporary historians may be believed, John uttered this folly at dinner, and, before his desert was ended, he was poisoned in a dish of autumn pears.

In all probability the king was seized with one of those severe typhus fevers often endemic in the fenny countries at the close of the year. The symptoms of alternate cold and heat, detailed by the chroniclers, approximate closely with that disease.

Whether by the visitation of God or through the agency of man, the fact is evident, that King John was stricken with a fatal illness at Swinshead; but, sick as he was, he ordered himself to be put in a litter and carried forward on his northern progress. At Newark he could proceed no further, but gave himself up to the fierce attacks of the malady. He sent for the abbot and monks of Croxton, and made full confession of all his sins (no slight undertaking); he then forgave his enemies, and enjoined those about him to charge his son, Henry to do the same, and, after taking the eucharist, and making all his officers swear fealty to his eldest son, he expired, commending his soul to God, and his body to burial in Worcester Cathedral, according to his espe-

cial directions, close to the grave of St. Wulstan,[1] a Saxon bishop of great reputation for sanctity, lately canonised. This vicinity the dying king evidently considered likely to be convenient for keeping his corpse from the attacks of the evil one he had indefatigably served during his life. His contemporary historians did not seem to think that this arrangement, however prudently planned, was likely to be effectual in altering his destination; as one of them sums up his character, in these words of terrific energy — "Hell felt itself defiled by the presence of John."

The queen and the royal children were at Gloucester when the news of the king's death arrived. Isabella and the Earl of Pembroke immediately caused Prince Henry to be proclaimed in the streets of that city.

In the coronation letter of Henry III. is preserved the memory of a very prudent step taken by Isabella as queen-mother. As the kingdom was in an unsettled and tumultuous state, and she was by no means assured of the safety of the young king, she provided for the security of both her sons by sending her son Richard to Ireland, which was at that time loyal and tranquil. The boy-king says in his proclamation,[2] "The lady queen our mother has upon advice, and having our assent to it, sent our brother Richard to Ireland, yet so that you and our kingdom can speedily see him again."

[1] The noble monument of King John in black marble, with his fine effigy, is to be seen in Worcester cathedral, though removed to the quire at some distance from the desirable neighbourhood of the Saxon saint. John was reckoned by his contemporaries extremely handsome; but the great breadth over the cheeks and ears, which is the leading characteristic of this monarch, is not consistent with modern ideas of beauty. In the mere animal comeliness of complexion and form he probably excelled.

[2] Fœdera, vol. i.

Only nine days after the death of John, the queen caused her young son to be crowned in the cathedral of Gloucester.[1] Although so recently a widow, the extreme exigencies of the times forced Isabella to assist at her child's coronation. The regal diadem belonging to his father being lost in Lincoln Washes,[2] and the crown of Edward the Confessor being far distant in London, the little king was crowned with a gold throat collar belonging to his mother. A very small part of England recognised the claims of Isabella's son: even Gloucester was divided, the citizens who adhered to the young king being known by the cross of Aquitaine, cut in white cloth on their breasts.

Henry was then just nine years old; but though likely to be a minor for some years, it must be observed that the queen-mother was offered no share in the government; and as queens of England so frequently acted as regents during the absence of their husbands or sons, this exclusion is a proof that the English held Isabella in little esteem.

London and the adjacent counties were then in the hands of Louis of France. Among other possessions, he held the queen's dower palace of Berkhampstead,

[1] Speed's Chronicle.

[2] Reports were circulated in Norfolk that the royal circlet of King John was certainly found in the late excavation for the Eau brink drainage, near the spot indicated by chroniclers as the scene of this loss. And a well-sinker, who knew nothing of history, informed a gentleman of a curious discovery he made when digging for a well in the same neighbourhood. "I found," said he, "in the course of my well-digging, a king's crown." On being desired to describe it, he declared that it was not larger than the top of a quart pot, but cut out in ornaments round the top; that it looked black, and that he had no idea of the value, for when a Jew pedlar offered him three pounds ten shillings, he was glad to accept it, but he afterwards heard that the Jew had made upwards of fifty pounds by the speculation. This was most likely one of the golden coronals or circlets fixed at the back of the king's helmets, as its size shows that it was not the regal crown.

which was strongly garrisoned with French soldiers. However, the valor and wisdom of the Protector Pembroke, and the intrepidity of Hubert de Burgh, in a few months cleared England of these intruders.

Before her year of widowhood had expired, Isabella retired to her native city Angoulême, July, 1217. The Princess Joanna resided in the vicinity of her mother's domains, being at Valence, the capital of the Count de la Marche. Nothing could be more singular than the situation of Queen Isabella, as mother to the promised bride of Count Hugh, and that bride but seven years old. The valiant Lusignan himself was absent from his territories, venting his superfluous combativeness, and soothing his crosses in love by a crusade which he undertook in 1216. The demise of his father obliged him to revisit Poitou in 1220, where he was frequently in company with the Queen of England, who was at the same time his false love, and the mother of his little wife. Isabella, at the age of thirty-four, still retained that marvellous beauty which had caused her to be considered the Helen of the middle ages. It is therefore no great wonder that she quickly regained her old place in the constant heart of the valiant Marcher. Accordingly, we find this notation in Matthew of Westminster, that in the year 1220, or "about that time, Isabella, queen-dowager of England, having before crossed the seas, took to her husband her former spouse, the Count of Marche in France, without leave of her son, the king or his council."[1] As the queen took this step without asking the consent of any one in

1 Matthew Paris. Beside M. Paris all historians, ancient and modern, mention the romantic re-marriage. Rymer's Fœdera, Hemmingford, Wikes, Rapin, p. 315, Carte, Tyrrell, Collier, and Moreri.

England, the council of regency withheld her dower from her, to the indignation of her husband. A very few months afforded them an opportunity of righting this wrong.

The countess-queen and the Count de la Marche had still retained at Valence the little Joanna, who had been deprived by her mother of her mature bridegroom. But it so happened that the council of Henry III. greatly needed the restoration of the princess, in order to make peace with Alexander of Scotland; upon which King Henry took the opportunity of writing a congratulatory epistle to his mother on her marriage, and demanding the restoration of his sister; but Queen Isabella, highly incensed at the deprivation of her jointure, positively refused to give up the princess. The young king then wrote to the pope, earnestly requesting him to excommunicate his mother and father-in-law: the latter he vituperated as a very Judas. Before the pope complied with this dutiful request he inquired a little into the merits of the case, and found that Henry III. had deprived his royal mother of all in England and Guienne that appertained to her as the widow of King John, because she did not ask his leave to marry a second time; and as he was only fourteen, that was scarcely to be expected. After a most voluminous correspondence between the contending parties, on the King of Scots declaring he would not be pacified without a wife from the royal family, Henry was glad to make up the difference with his mother by paying her arrears of jointure, and receiving from the Count de la Marche the princess Joanna.[1]

[1] M. Paris. The princess was married to Alexander II. at York, Midsummer, 1221. Though only eleven years of age, her marriages had already twice stopped a cruel war. She was a child of angelic beauty and sweet-

The King of France was the liege lord of Count de la Marche; but the countess-queen was infuriated whenever she saw her husband arrayed against the territories of her son, and her sole study was, how French Poitou could be rendered independent of the King of France. "She was a queen,"[1] she said, "and she disdained to be the wife of a man who had to kneel before another." Another cause of violent irritation existed:—

Prince Alphonso, the brother of the King of France, had refused her daughter by the Count de la Marche, and married Jane of Thoulouse: on this occasion King Louis created his brother Count of Poictiers, and required the Count de la Marche, as possessor of Poitou, to do him homage. Isabella manifested great disdain at the heiress of Thoulouse[1] taking precedence of *her*, the crowned queen of England—mother, as she said, of a king and an empress.

From that time she suffered the unfortunate Count de la Marche to have no domestic peace till he transferred his allegiance from Louis IX. to her son King Henry III., who undertook the conquest of French Poitou at the instigation of his mother.[2]

Several years of disastrous warfare ensued. The husband of Isabella nearly lost his whole patrimony, while the district of the Angoumois was overrun by the French.[3] After King Henry III. lost the battle of Taillebourg, fought on the banks of Isabella's native river, the sparkling Charente, a series of defeats followed, which utterly dispossessed both the queen-

ness of disposition, and was surnamed by the English Joan Makepeace. She died, when twenty-six, of a decline produced by a change of climate. The king of Scots, at this pacification, received back his two sisters, who had been pledged to King John for a sum of money.

[1] Speed. [2] Tillet de Recueil, 1241. [3] M. Paris.

mother and her husband of their territories. Henry III. fled to Bordeaux, scarcely deeming himself safe in that city; while the queen-mother, whose pride had occasioned the whole catastrophe, had no resource but to deliver herself up to the mercy of the King of France. The Count de la Marche had fought like a lion; but his valour availed little, when the minds of his people were against the war.

In this dilemma, the countess-queen and her lord determined to send their heir, the young Hugh de Lusignan, to see how King Louis seemed disposed towards them. That amiable monarch received the son of his enemies with such benevolence, that the Count de la Marche, taking his wife and the rest of the children with him to the camp of St. Louis, threw themselves at his feet, and were very kindly received, on no worse conditions than doing homage to Prince Alphonso for three castles.

It might have been supposed that the restless spirit of Isabella was tamed by these disasters; but soon after, in 1244, the life of King Louis was twice attempted: the last time the assassins were convicted, and before their execution confessed that they had been suborned by Queen Isabella to poison the good king of France. Isabella gave colour to the accusation by flying for sanctuary to the abbey of Fontevraud, "where she was hid in the secret chamber, and lived at her ease," says Matthew Paris; "though the Poictevins and French, considering her as the origin of the disastrous war with France, called her by no other name than Jezebel, instead of her rightful appellation of Isabel." Matthew says, the whole brunt of this disgraceful business fell upon her unfortunate husband and son. They were seized, and about to be

tried on this accusation of poisoning, when Count de la Marche made appeal to battail, and offered to prove in combat with his accuser Alphonso, brother to St. Louis, that his wife was belied. Alphonso, who appears to have had no great stomach to the fray, declined it on the plea that Count Hugh was so "treason-spotted," it would be pollution to fight with him. Then Isabella's young son Hugh dutifully offered to fight in the place of his sire, and Alphonso actually appointed the day and place to meet him; nevertheless, he again withdrew, excusing himself on the plea of the infamy of the family. "This sad news," says old Matthew, "for evil tidings hasten fast, soon reached the ears of Isabella in the secret chamber of Fontevraud."

The affront offered to her brave young son seems to have broken the heart of Isabella. She never came out of the secret chamber again, but, assuming the veil, died of a decay brought on by grief, in the year 1246.

As a penance for her sins, she desired to be buried humbly, in the common cemetery at Fontevraud. Some years afterwards her son, King Henry III., visiting the tombs of his ancestors at Fontevraud, was shocked at being shown the lowly grave of his mother: he raised for her a stately tomb with a fine enamelled statue in the choir at Fontevraud, near Henry II. and Eleanora of Aquitaine, her mother-in-law.[1]

Her statue is of fine proportions, clad in flowing garments, confined to the waist by a girdle. She wears the wimple veil and conventual frontlet. Her face is oval, with regular and majestic features.[2]

[1] Matthew of Westminster.

[2] The state of the royal effigies at Fontevraud in the present century is thus

The Count de la Marche survived his unhappy partner but till the year 1249. The enmity between him and the family of St. Louis entirely disappeared after the death of Isabella. Her husband shared the crusade that the king of France made to Damietta, and fell covered with wounds in one of the eastern battles, fighting by the side of his old antagonist, Alphonso Count of Poictiers.[1]

Isabella left several children by this marriage; five sons, and at least three daughters. Her eldest son by the Count de la Marche[2] succeeded not only to his

described in Stothard's Monumental Antiquities, by the admirable pen of Mrs. Bray. "When Mr. Stothard first visited France, during the summer of 1816, he came direct to Fontevraud to ascertain if the effigies of our ancient kings who were buried there were yet in existence. He found the abbey converted into a prison, and discovered in a cellar belonging to it the effigies of Henry II., his Queen Eleanora of Guienne, Richard I., and Isabella of Angoulême. The chapel where the figures were placed previous to the revolution was entirely destroyed, and these valuable effigies then removed to a cellar, where they were exposed to constant mutilation from the prisoners who came to draw water from a well twice every day. It appeared they had sustained severe injury, as Mr. Stothard found the broken fragments scattered round. He made drawings of the figures, and upon his return to England suggested to our government the propriety of obtaining possession of these interesting relics, that they might be placed among the rest of our royal effigies in Westminster Abbey. The application failed, but it succeeded in calling the attention of the French government towards these remains, and of preserving them from total destruction."

[1] Montfaucon, who gives the date of his death 1249.

[2] As a modern writer has committed the strange blunder of marrying Isabella to her own son, instead of her former husband, the following note is subjoined from Speed, no slight authority in matters of genealogy.

"Queen Isabella, surviving King John, was married to Hugh le Brun, Earl of March, and Lord of Lusignan and Valence in Poictou, *to whom first she should have been married, but yet (as seemeth) continued her affection to him till now.* By him she had divers children, greatly advanced by Henry III., their half brother (and as greatly maligned by his subjects). The eldest was Hugh Earl of March and Angoulême; the second Guy de Lusignan, slain at the battle of Lewes; the third, William de Valence, Earl of Pembroke; the fourth, Aymer de Valence, Bishop of Winchester; the fifth, Geoffrey of Lusignan, Lord of Hastings.

father's patrimony, but to his mother's inheritance of the Angoumois. He is reckoned in the genealogy of Lusignan as Hugh XI., Count de la Marche and Angoulême.

The Count de la Marche sent all his younger sons, with his daughter Alice, to Henry III., who provided for them very liberally, to the great indignation of his subjects.

ELEANOR OF PROVENCE,

SURNAMED LA BELLE,

QUEEN OF HENRY III.

CHAPTER I.

Eleanor of Provence—Parentage—Birth—Talents—Poem written by her—Her beauty—Henry accepts Eleanor without dowry—Escorted to England—Married at Canterbury—Crowned at Westminster—Costume and jewels—Henry's attention to dress—Rapacity of the queen's relatives—Birth of her eldest son—Paintings in her chambers—Attempt on the king's life—Eleanor rules the king—Birth of her eldest daughter—Queen accompanies the king to Guienne—Birth of the Princess Beatrice—Return to England—Turbulence of Eleanor's uncle—Eleanor's second son born—King and queen robbed on the highway—Eleanor's unpopularity in London—Dower—Eleanor's mother—King pawns plate and jewels—Marriage of Princess Margaret—Projected crusade—Eleanor appointed queen-regent—King's departure for Guienne—Makes his will—Bequeaths royal power to Eleanor—Princess Katharine born.

ELEANOR of Provence was perhaps the most unpopular queen that ever presided over the court of England. She was unfortunately called to share the crown and royal dignity of a feeble-minded sovereign at an earlier age than any of her predecessors; for, at the time of her marriage with King Henry, she had scarcely completed her fourteenth year,[1] a period of life when her education was imperfect, her judgment unformed, and her character precisely that of a spoiled child, of precocious beauty and genius—perilous gifts! which in her case served but to foster vanity and self-sufficiency.

[1] M. Paris.

This princess was the second of the five beautiful daughters of Berenger, Count of Provence, the grandson of Alfonso, king of Arragon. Berenger was the last and most illustrious of the royal Provençal counts; and even had he not been the sovereign of the land of song, his own verses would have entitled him to a distinguished rank among the troubadour poets.[1] His consort Beatrice, daughter of Thomas Count of Savoy, was scarcely less celebrated for her learning and literary powers.[2]

From her accomplished parents the youthful Eleanor inherited both a natural taste and a practical talent for poetry, which the very air she breathed tended to foster and encourage. Almost before she entered her teens, she had composed an heroic poem in her native Provençal tongue.

This work is still in existence, and is to be found in MS. in the royal library at Turin.[3] The composition of this romance was the primary cause to which the princess, or, (as she was then styled) the infanta of Provence owed her elevation to the crown-matrimonial of England. Her father's major-domo and confidant, Romeo,[4] was the person to whose able management Count Berenger was indebted for his success in matching his portionless daughters with the principal poten-

[1] Sismondi's Literature of the South.

[2] According to some writers, she was the friend and correspondent of Richard Cœur de Lion, and it has been generally supposed that the concluding verse *Envoye*, in his celebrated prison poem, beginning "Comtesse," is addressed to this lady, to whom also he is said to have sent a copy of his sonnets. Sismondi and J. P. Andrews.

[3] Nostrodamus, Hist. of Troubadours.

[4] Crescembini. Romeo is mentioned by Dante as one of the greatest Italian poets of his time; he was tutor to Eleanor and her sister Marguerite.

tates of Europe. No doubt, to Romeo's sagacious advice the following steps taken by young Eleanor may be attributed.

She sent to Richard Earl of Cornwall, Henry the Third's brother, a fine Provençal romance of her own indicting,[1] on the adventures of Blandin of Cornwall and Guillaume of Miremas, his companion, who undertook great perils for the love of the Princess Briende and her sister Irlonde (probably Britain and Ireland), dames of incomparable beauty.

Richard of Cornwall, to whom the young infanta sent, by way of a courtly compliment,[2] a poem so appropriately furnished with a paladin of Cornwall for a hero, was then at Poitou, preparing for a crusade, in which he hoped to emulate his royal uncle and namesake, Richard I. He was highly flattered by the attention of the young princess, who was so celebrated for her personal charms that she was called Eleanor la Belle; but as it was out of his power to testify his grateful sense of the honour by offering his hand and heart to the royal Provençal beauty in return for her romantic rhymes, he being already the husband of one good lady, the daughter of the great Earl Protector Pembroke, he obligingly recommended her to his brother King Henry for a queen.

[1] Lives of the Troubadours by Nostrodamus, who very stupidly mistakes Richard Earl of Cornwall for his uncle Cœur de Lion; but Fauriel has, in the Revue des Deux Mondes, satisfactorily explained the blunder

[2] The poem written by the Princess Eleanor bears marks of its origin, being precisely the sort of composition that a child or young girl of some genius and little literary experience might have composed. It was not without its popularity in her native country, where it is yet remembered. Probably the young Eleanor received some assistance from her mother and father, as the Countess Beatrice and the Count Berenger were both poets of great popularity in the Provençal dialect.—*Fauriel, Revue des Deux Mondes.*

That monarch, whose share of personal advantages was but small, and whose learning and imaginativeness far exceeded his wit and judgment, had been disappointed in no less than five attempts to enter the holy pale of matrimony, with as many different princesses. Henry would fain have espoused a princess of Scotland, whose eldest sister had married his great minister Hubert de Burgh;[1] but his nobles from jealousy of Hubert dissuaded him from this alliance.[2]

Henry then vainly sued for a consort in the courts of Bretagne, Austria, and Bohemia; and at length, wholly dispirited by his want of success in every matrimonial negotiation into which he had entered, the royal Cœlebs, having arrived at the age of twenty-five, began, no doubt, to imagine himself devoted to a life of single blessedness, and remained four years without further attempts to provide himself with a queen.

In 1235, however, he again took courage, and offered his hand to Joanna, the daughter of the Earl of Ponthieu; and having, for the first time in his life, received a favourable answer to his proposals, a contract of marriage with this lady was signed, and ambassadors despatched for the pope's dispensation; but when they were within a few days' journey of Rome, Henry sent word that he had altered his mind, and charged them not to proceed.[3]

This sudden change of purpose was occasioned by the agreeable impression Henry had received from his

[1] It was reported to king Henry by Hubert's jealous foes that he had dissuaded a lady from fulfilling her engagement with the king, by telling her "that Henry was a squint-eyed fool, a lewd man, a leper, deceitful, perjured, more faint-hearted than a woman, and utterly unfit for the company of any fair or noble lady. (Articles of impeachment, Speed.)

[2] Rapin.

[3] Matthew Paris. Matthew Westminster. Rapin.

brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, of the beauty and brilliant genius of his fair correspondent, Eleanor of Provence.[1]

The treaty was privately opened in June 1235; and as soon as Henry thought proper to make known to his court that he had broken his engagement with the maid of Ponthieu, his nobles, according to Hemmingford, were so obliging as to recommend him to marry the very lady on whom he had secretly fixed his mind.

As Louis IX. of France, afterwards styled St. Louis was married to Eleanor's eldest sister, the infanta Marguerite of Provence, Henry's counsellors were of opinion that great political advantages might be derived from this alliance.

Henry discreetly made choice of three sober priests for his procurators at the court of Count Berenger. The bishops of Ely[2] and Lincoln, and the prior of Hurle; to these were added the master of the Temple. Though Henry's age more than doubled that of the fair maid of Provence, of whose charms and accomplishments he had received such favourable reports, and he was aware that the poverty of the generous count, her father, was almost proverbial, yet the king's constitutional covetousness impelled him to demand the enormous portion of twenty thousand marks with this fairest flower of the land of roses and sweet song.

Count Berenger, in reply objected, on the part of his daughter, to the very inadequate dower Henry would be able to settle upon her during the life of his

[1] We find in Rymer's Fœdera, about this period, a letter written by Henry III. to the Earl of Savoy, brother to the Countess Beatrice, Eleanor's mother, entreating his friendly assistance in bringing about the marriage.

[2] Rymer's Fœdera.

mother Queen Isabella. Henry, on this, proceeded to lower his demands from one sum to another, till finding that the impoverished but high-spirited Provençal count was inclined to resent his sordid manner of bargaining for the nuptial portion,[1] and being seriously alarmed lest he should lose the lady, he in a great fright wrote to his ambassadors "to conclude the marriage forthwith, either with money or without, but at all events to secure the lady for him, and conduct her safely to England without delay."

The contract was then joyfully signed by Count Berenger, and the Infanta Eleanor was delivered with all due solemnity to the ambassadors.

Henry, in the course of his matrimonial negociations with the Count of Provence, addressed two letters, one to the Count and the other to the Countess of Provence, in which he requests them to permit the nuptials of Eleanor to be postponed till the feast of St. Martin, and to explain to their daughter that such was his wish.[2]

Eleanor was dowered in the reversion of the queen-mother, Isabella of Angoulême's dower, whose settlement is recapitulated in the marriage treaty between Henry and his future consort; but no immediate settlement is specified for the young queen.[3]

When the royal bride commenced her journey to

[1] In his private instructions to John, the son of Philip, his seneschal, and his procurators, Henry by a postscript subjoins the following scale of progressive abatements, which he empowers his trusty and well-beloved to make, from his first demand of 20,000 marks :—15,000—10,000—7,000—5,000—3,000 marcarum.—Rymer's Fœdera.

It is by no means certain that even the paltry minimum here named by the royal calculator was obtained.

[2] These letters are dated the 10th of October, 1235.

England, she was attended on her progress by all the chivalry and beauty of the south of France, a stately train of nobles, ladies, minstrels, and jongleurs, with crowds of humbler followers. She was treated with peculiar honours by Thibaut, the poet-king of Navarre, who feasted the fair Provençal princess and her company for five days, and attended her in person with all his knights and nobles to the French frontier. There she was met and welcomed by her eldest sister, the consort of that most amiable and virtuous of kings, St. Louis; and, after receiving the congratulations of these illustrious relatives, she embarked for England, landed at Dover, and on the 4th of January, 1236, was married to King Henry III. at Canterbury, by the archbishop, St. Edmund of Canterbury.[1]

Piers of Langtoft gives us the following description of the royal bride:—

> "Henry, our king, at Westminster took to wife
> The earl's daughter of Provence, the fairest May in life;
> Here name is Elinor, of gentle nurture;
> Beyond the sea there was no such creature."

All contemporary chronicles, indeed, whether in halting English rhymes or sonorous Latin prose,—to say nothing of the panegyrical strains of her countrymen, the Provençal poets,—are agreed in representing this princess as well deserving the surname of "La Belle."

King Henry conducted his youthful consort to London in great pride, attended by a splendid train of nobility and ecclesiastics, who had accompanied the sovereign to Canterbury in order to assist at his nuptials. Preparations of the most extraordinary magnificence were made for the approaching coronation of the newly-wedded queen, which was appointed to take place

[1] M. Paris.

on the feast of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, six days only after the bridal, being the 20th of January. Previous to that august ceremony, Henry had caused great improvements to be made in the palace of Westminster, for the reception of his young consort.

There is a precept in the twentieth year of his reign, directing that the king's great chamber at Westminster be painted a good green colour, like a curtain; that in the great gable or frontispiece of the said chamber a French inscription should be painted, and that the king's little wardrobe should also be painted of a green colour, to imitate a curtain. The queen's chamber was beautified and adorned with historical paintings at the same time.

The Saturday before the queen was crowned Henry laid the first stone of the Lady Chapel in Westminster Abbey. We read also that the good citizens of London, in their zealous desire of doing honour to their beautiful young queen, set about the scarcely less than Herculean labour of cleansing their streets from mud, and all other offensive accumulations, with which they were at that season of the year rendered almost impassable.

This laudable purification, which must have been regarded almost as a national blessing, being happily effected, the loyal citizens prepared all sorts of costly pageantry, before unheard of, to grace the coronation festival, and delight the young queen.

Eleanor was just at the happy age for enjoying the spectacle of all the gay succession of brave shows and dainty devices so elegantly detailed by Matthew Paris, who, after describing streets hung with different coloured silks, garlands, and banners, and with lamps, cressets, and other lights at night, concludes by saying,—"But

why need I recount the train of those who performed the offices of the church; why describe the profusion of dishes which furnished the table, the abundance of venison, the variety of fish, the diversity of wine, the gaiety of the jugglers, the comeliness of the attendants? Whatever the world could produce for glory or delight, was there conspicuous."

But the most remarkable feature in the coronation of Eleanor of Provence must have been the equestrian procession of the citizens of London, who, on that occasion, claimed the office of cellarers to the king of England.

The claim of his loyal citizens having been wisely granted, they venturously mounted swift horses, and rode forth to accompany the king and queen from the Tower, clothed in long garments, embroidered with gold and silk of divers colours. They mounted to the number of three hundred and sixty; their steeds were finely trapped in array with shining bits and new saddles, each citizen bearing a gold or silver cup in his hand for the royal use, the king's trumpeters sounding before them; and so rode they in at the royal banquet, (better riders, belike, were they than the men who wear long gowns in the city of London in these degenerate days,) and served the king and that noble company with wine, according to their duty.[1]

The mayor of London, Andrew Buckerel the pepperer, who headed this splendid civic cavalcade, when he claimed the place of Master Michael Belot, the deputy of Albini, Earl of Arundel, the grand boteler or pincerna of England, was repulsed by order of the king, who said, "no one ought by right to perform

[1] Matthew Paris. City Record. Speed. As cellarers they handed the wine to the royal butler.

that service but Master Michael." The mayor submitted to the royal decision in this matter of high ceremonial, and served the two bishops at the king's right hand.[1] After the banquet, the earl-boteler received the cup out of which the king had drunk, as a matter of right, and Master Michael, his deputy, received the earl's robes. Gilbert de Sandford claimed for the service of keeping the queen's chamber-door at this coronation the queen's bed and all its furniture, as her chamberlain.[2]

Alms were bountcously distributed to the poor on this occasion, King Henry, with all his faults, being one of the most charitable of princes.

The most sumptuous and splendid garments ever seen in England were worn at the coronation of the young queen of Henry III. The peaceful and vigorous administration of Pembroke and Hubert de Burgh had filled England with wealth and luxury, drawn from their commerce with the south of France. The citizens of London wore at this splendid ceremony garments called cyclades, a sort of upper robe, made not only of silk, but of velvet worked with gold. Henry III., who was, like his father, the greatest fop in his dominions, did not, like King John, confine the orders of his wardrobe rolls to the adornment of his own person, but liberally issued benefactions of satin, velvet, cloth of gold, and ermine, for the apparelling of his royal ladies. No homely dress of green cloth was ordered for the attire of his lovely queen; but when a mantle

[1] Speed. City Records.

[2] As the citizens of London had claimed the service of the butlery, so those of Winchester claimed that of the royal kitchen; but the doings of the men of Winchester, in the capacity of cook's assistants, have not been recorded. The cloth that hung behind the king's table was claimed on the one side by the door-keepers, and on the other by the scullions, as their perquisite.

lined with ermine was made by his tailors for himself, another as rich was given out for Eleanor.

The elegant fashion of chaplets of gold and jewels, worn over the hair, was adopted by this queen, whose jewelry was of a magnificent order, and is supposed to have cost her doting husband nearly 30,000*l.*; an enormous sum if reckoned according to the value of our money. Eleanor had no less than nine guirlands or chaplets,[1] for her hair, formed of gold filagree and clusters of coloured precious stones. For state occasions she had a great crown, most glorious with gems, worth 1,500*l.* at that era; her girdles were worth 5,000 marks; and the coronation present given by her sister, Queen Marguerite of France, was a large silver peacock, whose train was set with sapphires and pearls, and other precious stones, wrought with silver. This elegant piece of jewelry was used as a reservoir for sweet waters, which were forced out of its beak into a basin of silver chased.

Henry did not forget his own apparel when he endowed his queen so richly with jewels; he was noted as the first prince who wore the costly material called baudekins, and arrayed in a garment of this brilliant tissue of gold, he sat upon his throne and "glittered very gloriously,"[2] when his young and lovely queen shared his third coronation.

The expenses of Eleanor's coronation were enormous. So great was the outlay beyond the king's resources, that Henry expended the portion of his sister Isabella,

[1] See the elegant description of this kind of head-dress, in the Lay of Sir Launfel, written a few years after.

"Their heads were dight well withal,
Each with a jolly coronal
With sixty gems or mo."

[2] Matthew Paris.

just married to the emperor of Germany, for the purpose of defraying them.[1] When he petitioned the lords for a thirtieth of his subjects' property as a relief from his difficulties, they told him "they had amply supplied funds both for his marriage and that of the empress; and as he had wasted the money, he might defray the expenses of his wedding as he could."

Great offence, it seems, had already been taken by the nation at the number of foreigners, especially Italians, who had accompanied or followed Queen, Eleanor to England. Among these was her uncle, Peter of Savoy, one of the younger brothers of the Countess of Provence. Henry had created Peter Earl of Richmond, and at the suit of the queen, bestowed upon him that part of London called the Savoy, from this prince. He paid the crown but the nominal quit-rent of three broad arrows. Peter founded there a noble palace, which the queen, his niece, afterwards purchased of him for her son Edmund, Earl of Lancaster.[2]

In the course of one short year, the ascendancy which the uncle of his young queen gained over the plastic mind of Henry was so considerable that the administration of the kingdom was entirely left to his discretion, and all the patronage of church and state passed through his hands.

[1] Henry had indeed fitted his sister out with a sumptuous wardrobe, the details of which he had personally superintended, with a degree of minute attention to linings, trimmings, purflings, and garniture, perfectly surprising in a male sovereign, but quite in accordance with the general frivolity of this monarch's character, and his taste for finery. He also favoured the officers of the wardrobe with a particular inventory of the dresses of the princess, and a description of the material and fashion of each, even to the *robe de chambre;* and having, by these extra pains for his sister's outward adornment, we suppose, satisfied his conscience, he appropriated the rest of her portion to his own use. (*Rapin. Strutt's British Costume.*)

[2] Pennant's London.

Richard, Earl of Cornwall, at that time the heir presumptive to the throne, though greatly attached to the king his brother, reprobated Henry's conduct in permitting the intrusion and interference of the queen's foreign relatives and attendants, bidding his brother "follow the prudent example of their brother-in-law, the emperor, who, when he received their sister, the Princess Isabella, sent back all her train of followers." The king of France too, he reminded Henry, had taken the same course, when he married the elder sister of Queen Eleanor.[1]

Henry continued to squander his revenues in useless expenses and presents to his new favourites.[2]

Queen Eleanor, in the fourth year of her marriage, brought an heir to England. The young prince was born on the 16th of June, 1239, at Westminster, and received the popular name of Edward, in honour of Edward the Confessor, for whose memory Henry III. cherished the deepest veneration.

The celebrated Earl of Leicester was one of the godfathers of Prince Edward, and held him at the baptismal font; he was then in the height of favour both with Eleanor and the king. But the scene changed before the queen left her lying-in chamber; for when Eleanor gave a grand festival on occasion of her church-

[1] M. Paris.

[2] The most distinguished among these for talent and enterprise was the famous Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, the third son of Simon, Count de Montfort, the sanguinary leader of the crusade against the Albigenses. He had served the office of seneschal, or high steward of the royal household, at the coronation of the queen: and this year Henry, with his own hand, secretly bestowed upon him his widowed sister, Eleanor, Countess of Pembroke, in St. Stephen's chapel, though the princess had vowed to become a nun. There were circumstances, it should seem, that rendered a hasty marriage necessary; and an enormous bribe from Henry purchased a dispensation for this marriage from the pope, the lady having taken the ring but not the veil of a nun.—Matthew Paris. Speed. Rapin.

ing,[1] and the king summoned all the great ladies of the land to attend the queen to church, Leicester brought his newly wedded wife, the king's sister, to perform her devoir to Eleanor, but was received with a burst of fury by Henry, who called him the seducer of his sister, and an excommunicated man, and ordered his attendants to turn him out of the palace. Leicester endeavoured to remonstrate, but Henry would not hear him, and he was expelled, weeping with rage, and vowing vengeance against the young queen, to whose influence he attributed this reverse.

Independently of his noble taste in architecture, of which Westminster Abbey is a standing proof, Henry III. was undoubtedly possessed of a love for the fine arts; for we find, in the seventeenth year of his reign, a precept directed to the sheriff of Hampshire, commanding him to cause the king's wainscoted chamber in the castle of Winchester to be painted with Saxon histories, and the same pictures with which it had been painted before; which proves, not only that historical paintings in oil on wainscot were then in use, but that they had been painted so long that the colours were faded, and required renewing.

Again, we have a precept of Henry III., twenty-three years after this period, which runs thus:—"Pay out of our treasury to Odo the goldsmith, and Edward his son, one hundred and seventeen shillings and tenpence, for oil, varnish, and colours bought, and pictures made in the chamber of our queen, at Westminster, between the octaves of Holy Trinity and the feast of St. Barnabas the same year, in the twenty-third year of our reign."[2]

[1] Sandford's Genealogies.

[2] Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting. Strutt.

Among many other proofs of attention paid by Henry to his young queen on the birth of his heir, we find that he "ordered the chamber behind her chapel in his palace of Westminster, and the private chamber of that apartment, supposed to be Eleanor's dressing-room, to be freshly wainscoted and lined, and that a list or border should be made, well painted, with images of our Lord and angels, with incense-pots scattered over the list or border." He also directed that the four evangelists should be painted in the queen's chamber, and that a crystal vase should be made for keeping the relics he possessed.

A few curious particulars, illustrative of the interior of the ancient palace of our English kings at Woodstock, may be gathered from the following minute instructions contained in a precept[1] addressed by Henry III., in the 25th of his reign, to the keeper of that palace, directing him "to cause an extension of the iron trellises on the steps leading from our chamber to the *herbarium*, or garden;[2] also of the wooden lattices in two windows of our queen's chamber, and to cause a pent to be made over these windows, covered with lead, and an aperture to be made in the pent, between the hall and our queen's chamber and the chapel towards the borders of our herbarium, and two

[1] Rot. Liberati, 25th Henry III., m. 23.

[2] Gardening was by no means neglected in the reign of this prince; for Matthew Paris mentions that the inclement year 1257 was a year of famine; that apples were scarce, and pears scarce; but that figs and cherries, plums, and all kinds of fruit included in shells, had totally failed. Several of these fruits are afterwards named in our annals, as lately introduced in the reign of Henry VIII.; but there is not a doubt that the civilization of England had greatly retrograded from the time of the Provençal queens. During the barbarous wars, from the reign of Henry V. to Richard III., England had lost many arts, even horticulture,—for the fruits re-introduced in the reign of Henry VIII. were undoubtedly cultivated in that of Henry III.

windows of white glass looking towards the said borders. Two spikes, also, in the gabel of our hall, and windows of the same kind on the east of the hall, and the pictures now in the hall are to be repaired. And we desire that all the courts, fountains, and walls of our houses there be repaired."[1]

This reign affords the first example of a poet laureat, in the person of one Master Henry, to whom, by the appellation of "our beloved versificator,"[1] the king orders one hundred shillings to be given in payment of his arrears. This officer was in all probability introduced into the royal household by the Provençal queen, who was, as we have seen, herself a poet, and who had been accustomed in her early youth to be surrounded by minstrels and troubadours, in the literary court of her accomplished parents.

Henry III. was also a patron of literature, and a great lover of Provençal poetry. Fauriel points out several romances written under the superintendence of this king, who, when he married Eleanor of Provence, received a partner whose tastes and pursuits certainly assimilated with his own; and to this circumstance may, no doubt, be attributed the unbounded influence which she acquired over his mind, and which she retained long after the bloom of youth and beauty had passed away.

While the king and queen were still residing at the palace of Woodstock, about three months after the birth of their heir, an attempt was made on the life of the king by a mad poet named Ribald, or Ribaut—who, according to some of the chroniclers, was a gentleman and a knight.[2] One day he rushed into the

[1] Madox, History Exchequer. [2] Speed. M. Paris.

royal presence, and, before the whole court, called upon Henry to resign the crown which he had usurped and so long detained from him. The officers of the household forced him out of the presence-chamber, and would have inflicted a severe chastisement upon him, if the kind-hearted monarch had not interposed, and charged them not to hurt a man who talked so like a person out of his senses. The king told them to take him into his hall, and entertain him hospitably and let him go. This was done, and Ribaut got into high spirits, and began to be very amusing to the royal retinue, joculating for their entertainment, and singing some choice minstrelsy.[1] Thus he wiled away the time till dark, when he stole into the king's bedchamber through a window, armed with a long sharp knife, and concealed himself among the rushes under the king's bed.

Henry, fortunately for himself, passed that night in the queen's chamber, and Ribald, rising up at midnight, stabbed the bolster of the royal bed several times, searching for the king in vain, and demanding where he was, in a loud roaring voice, which so alarmed Margaret Bisset, one of the queen's maids of honour, who was sitting up late reading a devout book by the light of a lamp, that her shrieks awakened the king's servants, who took him into custody. The unhappy creature was executed at Coventry for this offence.[2]

The following year, two other uncles of the queen, Thomas, Count of Savoy, and Boniface, his younger brother, visited England;[3] and Henry, out of complai-

[1] Wikes.

[2] In these days he would have been with more propriety consigned to an asylum for lunatics. The expression of "ribald rhymes" was no doubt derived from the name of this frantic versifier of the thirteenth century.

[3] M. Paris. Polydore Vergil. Speed.

sance to his consort, received and entertained them with such magnificence, that not knowing how to support the charge by honest means, he sent word to the Jews, that unless they presented him with twenty thousand marks, he would expel them all the kingdom; and thus he supplied himself with money for his unjust generosity.

The death of St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, furnished Henry with a further opportunity of obliging Eleanor, by obtaining the nomination of her uncle Boniface to the primacy of England.

Matthew of Westminster, as well as Paris, informs us that Eleanor wrote, with her ôwn hand, a very elegant epistle to the pope in his behalf, "taking upon herself," says the worthy chronicler, (who appears to have been highly scandalised at female interference in ecclesiastical affairs,) "for no other reason than his relationship to her, to urge the cause of this unsuitable candidate in the warmest manner; and so," continues he, "my lord the pope, when he had read the letter, thought proper to name this man, who had been chosen by a woman; and it was commonly said that he was chosen by female intrigue."

Among other proofs of Eleanor's unbounded influence over the mind of her lord, it was observed, that when, on the death of Gilbert Mareschal, Earl of Pembroke, his brother Walter demanded of the king the office of Earl Marshal, which was hereditary in his family, Henry at first in a great passion denied him, telling him, "that his two brothers were a pair of turbulent traitors, and that he had presumed to attend a tournament at which he had forbidden him to be present." Yet, when the earl, having succeeded in interesting Queen Eleanor in his favour, again preferred his suit,

it was immediately granted through her powerful intercession.[1]

Queen Eleanor presented her royal husband with a daughter in the year 1241, who was named Margaret, after the elder sister of Eleanor, Margaret, Queen of France.

The following year, the queen accompanied the king her husband on his ill-advised expedition against her brother-in-law, the King of France,[2] with whom that peace-loving monarch Henry III. had suffered himself to be involved in a quarrel, to oblige his mother, Isabella of Angoulême.[3]

The king and queen embarked at Portsmouth, May 19, 1242.

Henry was totally unsuccessful in his attacks on the King of France, and, after a series of defeats,[4] took refuge with his queen at Bordeaux, to the great scandal of all his English knights and nobles, many of whom forsook their sovereign and returned home; which Henry revenged in the usual way, by confiscating their estates.

Eleanor gave birth to another daughter at Bordeaux, whom she named Beatrice, after her mother, the Countess of Provence.[5]

In consequence of the close connexion between their queens, Louis was induced to grant a truce of five years to his vanquished foe. Henry and Eleanor then resolved to spend a merry winter at Bordeaux, where they amused themselves with as much feasting and pageantry as if Henry had obtained the most splendid victories, although he was much impoverished by losing his military chest, and his moveable chapel-

[1] M. Paris. [2] M. Westminster. Rapin.
[3] See her Memoirs. [4] M. Paris. Rapin. [5] M. Paris. Rapin.

royal, with all its rich plate, at the battle of Taillebourg.

When Henry and Eleanor returned to England, they landed at Portsmouth, and orders were issued that the principal inhabitants of every town on the route to London should testify their loyal affection, by coming forth on horseback in their best array, to meet and welcome their sovereign and his queen.[1]

During the residence of the royal family on the continent, Queen Eleanor strengthened her interest by bringing about a union between her youngest sister Cincia or Sancha, and the king's brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who had recently become a widower. The marriage was solemnised in England, whither the Countess of Provence conducted the affianced bride in the autumn of the same year.

Henry called upon the Jews to furnish the funds for the splendid festivities which he thought proper to ordain in honour of the nuptials between his brother and the sister of his queen. One Jew alone, the rich Aaron of York, was compelled to pay no less than four hundred marks of gold, and four thousand of silver; and the Jews of London were mulcted in like proportion. The charge Henry was at, on account of this marriage, may be estimated by the wedding-dinner alone, which consisted of thirty thousand dishes.

"The king," say the chroniclers of that day, "thought he never could do enough to testify his love for the queen and her family.[2]"

The Countess of Provence, not contented with the splendour of her entertainment, thought proper, before she departed, to borrow four thousand marks of the king for the use of her husband.

[1] Speed. [2] M. Paris.

The misconduct of Eleanor's uncles, and their unfitness for the high and responsible situation in which they were placed in England, may be gathered from the following disgraceful fracas which took place between the Archbishop Boniface and the monks of St. Bartholomew. In the year 1244 Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, thought proper to intrude himself in the Bishop of London's diocese on a visitation to the Priory of St. Bartholomew. The monks, though they liked not his coming, received him with respect, and came out in solemn procession to meet him; but the archbishop said he came not to receive honour, but for the purposes of ecclesiastical visitation. On this, the monks replied, that having a learned bishop of their own, they ought not to be visited by any other. This answer was so much resented by the wrathful primate that he smote the sub-prior on the face, exclaiming in his ungoverned fury, "Indeed, indeed, doth it become ye English traitors thus to withstand me?" and, with oaths not proper to repeat, he tore the rich cope of the sub-prior to pieces, and trampled it under his feet, and thrust him against a pillar of the chancel with such violence that he had well-nigh slain him. The monks seeing their sub-prior thus maltreated, pushed the archbishop back, and in so doing discovered that he was cased in armour, and prepared for battle. The archbishop's attendants, who were all Provençals to a man, then fell on the monks, whom they beat, buffeted, and trampled under foot. The monks, in their rent and miry garments, ran to show their wounds and to complain of their wrongs to their bishop, who bade them go and tell the king thereof. The only four who were capable of getting as far as Westminster proceeded to the palace in a doleful plight; but the king would neither see them nor receive their com-

plaint.[1] The populace of London were, however, in great indignation, and were disposed to tear the archbishop to pieces, pursuing him all the way to Lambeth with execrations, crying aloud, "Where is this ruffian, this cruel smiter? He is no winner of souls, but an exacter of money—a stranger born, unlearned, and unlawfully elected."

Boniface fled over to the palace, where he made his story good with the king through the influence of the queen, his niece; and the monks of St. Bartholomew got no redress.

About this time, Henry, it is said, ordered all the poor children from the streets and highways round Windsor and its neighbourhood to be collected, and munificently feasted in the great hall of the palace there. Afterwards the royal children were all publicly weighed, and their weight in silver distributed in alms among the destitute individuals present, for the good of the souls of the princely progeny of himself and Queen Eleanor.

The following year, 1244, the threatened war between England and Scotland was averted by a contract of marriage, in which the hand of the eldest daughter of Henry and Eleanor, the infant lady Margaret, was pledged to the heir of Scotland, the eldest son of Alexander II.[2]

In the beginning of the year 1245 the queen was delivered of her second son, prince Edmund. The parliament having in the preceding November refused an aid to the king, he levied a fine of fifteen hundred marks on the city of London, under pretence that they had sheltered one Walter Bukerel, whom he had ba-

[1] London Restituta. [2] M. Paris. M. Westminster.

nished. Henry was encouraged in his unconstitutional proceedings by a very trivial circumstance. A fire broke out in the pope's palace, and destroyed the chamber in which the principal deed of Magna Charta was kept, which made the queen fancy it was rendered null and void.[1]

England was at this period in such a state of misrule, that in Hampshire no jury dared to find a bill against any plunderer; nor was the system of universal pillage confined to the weak and undefended, since Matthew Paris declares "King Henry complained to him, that when he was travelling with the queen through that county, their luggage was robbed, their wine drunk, and themselves insulted by the lawless rabble."

Such was the insurgent state of Hampshire, that King Henry could find no judge or justiciary who would undertake to see the laws duly executed. In this dilemma, he was forced to sit on the bench of justice himself in Winchester Castle; and no doubt the causes determined by him would have been well worth the attention of modern reporters. While thus presiding personally on the King's Bench, Henry had occasion to summon Lord Clifford to answer at this justice-seat for some malefaction, when the turbulent misdoer not only contumaciously refused his attendance, but forced the king's officer to eat the royal warrant, seal and all![2] Henry punished him with spirit and courage.

One great cause of the queen's unpopularity in London originated from the unprincipled manner in which she exercised her influence to compel all vessels freighted with corn, wool, or any peculiarly valuable cargo, to unlade their cargoes at her hithe, or quay, called Queen-

[1] M. Paris. [2] Regal Annals, quoted by Speed.

hithe, because at that port, the dues of which formed a part of the revenues of the queens-consort of England, the tolls were paid according to the value of the lading.[1] This arbitrary mode of proceeding was without parallel on the part of her predecessors, and was considered as a serious grievance by the masters of vessels and merchants in general.[2] At last Eleanor, for a certain sum of money, sold her rights in this quay to her brother-in-law, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who, for a quit-rent of fifty pounds per annum, let it as a fee-farm to John Gisors, the mayor of London, for the sake of putting an end to the perpetual disputes between the merchants of London and the queen.[3]

In order to annoy the citizens of London, Henry, during the disputes regarding the queen's gold, revived the old Saxon custom of convening folkmotes, and by this means reminded the commons, as the great body of his subjects were called, that they had a political existence no less than the barons of England, and they never again forgot it.

Modern writers have asserted that there was no middle class in the days of the Plantagenets—what then, may we ask, were the citizens of London, those munificent and high-spirited merchants, whose wealth so often in this reign excited the cupidity of the court?

If the conduct of the king and queen towards this class of their subjects had been guided by a more enlightened policy, they might have found in their loyal affection no trivial support against Leicester, and the disaffected aristocracy of England; but, excited by

[1] Harrison's Survey of London. [2] Ibid.

[3] Harrison's Survey of London. This work marks the important incident of the folkmotes, which were used by the king to excite turbulence in the city against the magistrates who had offended.

the rapacity of Eleanor, the king pillaged and outraged the citizens, till they threw their weight into the scale of the mighty adversary of the monarchy.

Queen Eleanor was somewhat relieved from her pecuniary difficulties by the death of the queen-mother Isabella in 1246. She was put, after this event, in full possession of the dower lands appointed for the English queens; she however appropriated her replenished purse to the use of her mother, who, now a widow, paid another visit to England, to the great indignation of Henry. The king was discontented at the manner in which Count Berenger had disposed of Provence, to the exclusion of his eldest daughters. He was, besides, very little able to afford gifts to his wife's mother, since he had not at that very time wherewithal to meet his household expenses. He was advised, as the parliament refused to assist him with more money, to raise the sum required to satisfy his clamorous creditors by selling his plate and jewels.

"But where shall I find purchasers, if money be so scarce?" demanded the king. "In the city of London," was the reply. On this, Henry petulantly observed, "If the treasures of Augustus Cæsar were in the market, the city of London would purchase them, I suppose. Those clownish citizens, who call themselves barons, are an inexhaustible treasury in themselves."[1]

With the determination of participating in some of this envied wealth, Henry and Eleanor thought proper to keep the Christmas of 1248 in the city of London, and extorted presents from the most liberal of the leading men there, to the amount of upwards of two thousand marks.[2] This was, however, far from satisfying

[1] M. Paris. Speed. [2] Survey of London.

the royal visiters. Henry complained that he had not been treated with sufficient respect, and to testify his displeasure, proclaimed a fair in Tothill-fields for the benefit of the men of Westminster, which was to last a fortnight, and during that period he forbade the citizens of London to open their shops for any sort of traffic, to the great injury of trade.[1]

In Henry's thirty-fourth year occurs his order to the master of the Temple, that he deliver to Henry of the Wardrobe for two years' use, "a certain great book which is at his house in London, written in French, containing the acts of the King of Antioch and of other Kings." It had been compiled and illuminated under the care of Henry himself, and if it was, as supposed, relating to the crusading Provençal princes of Antioch, it would be a valuable history.[2]

The extreme straits to which the king and queen were at times reduced for the money so profusely lavished, may be gathered from the fact that in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, Henry, being without the means of paying the officers of the chapel royal at Windsor, issued an order to John Mansel, directing him to pawn the most valuable image of the Virgin Mary for the sum required, but under especial condition that this hallowed pledge be deposited in a decent place.[3]

In the year 1249, the royal coffers being entirely exhausted, and the parliament refusing to grant any aid, Henry proceeded to practice the degrading expedient of soliciting loans and gifts of every person of condition who entered his presence, assuring them "that it would

[1] Stow.

[2] Close Rolls, quoted by Brayley. Hist. Palace of Westminster.

[3] Madox.

be a greater act of charity to bestow money on him than on those who went from door to door begging an alms."[1]

The king and queen were next seized with an unwonted fit of economy, and not only forbore to make expensive grants and donations, but put all their servants on short allowance, abridged their wages, and refused to disburse any of the gratuities which the kings and queens of England had been accustomed to bestow. They ceased to put on their royal robes,[2] and, to save the expense of keeping a table, they daily invited themselves, with their son, Prince Edward, and a chosen number of their foreign kindred or favourites, to dine with the rich men of the city of London, or the great men of the court, and manifested much discontent unless presented with costly gifts at their departure, which they took not as obligations and proofs of loyal affection to their persons, but as matters of right.

The cry of the land in that reign was against foreign influence and foreign oppression; and it was a proverb, that no one but a Provençal or a Poictevin had any hopes of advancement either in the state or church; and which were held in the greatest abhorrence, the half-brothers of the king, or the uncles of the queen, it was difficult to say.[3]

[1] M. Paris. [2] Speed.

[3] A foreign historian declares that the language of the English was in this reign as barbarous as their manners. To add to other disquiets, there was a regular confusion of tongues, as in England no man rightly understood his neighbour. It was a mark of nobility and gentle breeding for people to converse in Norman-French, or in Provençal: and many affected these languages who knew them not. All the queen's court spoke Provençal; the law acknowledged no language but Norman-French, the church nothing but Latin, the people a corrupted Saxon; therefore, in addition to her other misfortunes, poor England had to endure the plagues of the Tower of Babel. "Some use," says a contemporary writer, "strange

On St. Dunstan's day, 1251, Queen Eleanor's apartments in Windsor Castle were struck by lightning, and the chimney of the room where she and the royal children were, was thrown down by the violence of the shock, and reduced to dust.[1] In the parks many oaks were rent asunder and uprooted; mills with their millers, sheepfolds with their shepherds, and husbandmen in the fields, were, by the same awful storm, beaten to the earth and destroyed.

The year, however, closed, more auspiciously than it commenced, with the espousals of the princess Margaret, the eldest daughter of Henry and Eleanor, then in her tenth year, to the young king of Scotland, Alexander III., who was about twelve. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp at York, where the royal families of England and Scotland kept their Christmas together.

The youthful bridegroom was knighted by King Henry in York Cathedral on Christmas-day, in the presence of the whole court, and the next morning the marriage was solemnised at an early hour. Henry endeavoured to persuade the young Alexander to pay him homage for the realm of Scotland; but the princely boy excused himself with good address from the per-

gibbering, chattering, waffing, and grating; then the Northumbres tongue (and especially at York) is so sharp, flitting, froyting, and unshape, that we Southron men may not understand that language."—*Trevisa*. Here we see the different elements out of which rose our English language in an actual state of struggle and ferment. The long alliance with Provence certainly threw into the composition of the rising language its share of harmony and elegance, and the long reign of Eleanor of Provence, and her constant communication with her own country, aided this transfusion. It is a curious circumstance, that the proclamations in order to preserve the king's peace, or at least to make the endeavour, had to be read in three languages—Saxon, French, and Latin.

[1] Stowe.

formance of this important ceremony,[1] by replying "that he came to York to be married, not to discuss an affair on which he, being a minor, could determine nothing without consulting the states of his kingdom." Henry, finding his son-in-law was of so determined a spirit, could not find it in his heart to break up the nuptial festivities by insisting on his demand, especially as the archbishop of York had generously promised to be at the expense of all the entertainment, which cost him upwards of four thousand marks, "and six hundred oxen, which," says Matthew Paris, "were all consumed at one meal."[2]

More worthy of remembrance, however, than these enormous devourings of the hospitable archbishop's beef, does the worthy chronicler consider the dignified and princely conduct of the youthful majesty of Scotland at his bridal feast, and the amiable manner in which he supplicated, on his knees, with clasped hands, to his royal father-in-law, for the pardon of Philip Lovel, one of his ministers, who lay under the king's heavy displeasure at that time. The royal bride joined in the petition, kneeling with her newly-wedded lord at her father's feet, and hanging on his garments. Henry was so moved by the artless earnestness of their supplications, as to be only able to articulate one word, "Willingly," and all who sat at the feast melted into tears of tenderness and admiration. The object for whom these interesting pleaders used such powerful intercessions was an unworthy peculator, convicted of receiving bribes in the discharge of his office; nevertheless, the misjudging sovereign was persuaded, by the engaging prattle of two inexperienced children, to invest him with the tempting office of treasurer. No

[1] Chronicles of Mailros. [2] Matthew Paris. Speed.

doubt the royal supplicants had received their cue from the queen, or some person who possessed the means of influencing them to make an appeal in favour of Lovel, for it is very improbable that at their tender age they would have thought of him at such a time.

The extravagance of dress at these nuptials has been noted by many writers. Matthew Paris declares the nobility were arrayed in vests of silk called *cointoises*, or *quintises*: and the day after the nuptial ceremony, the queen of England and her ladies laid these new robes aside, and appeared clad in others still more costly, and of a new pattern. The robes *quintises*, thus named to express their fanciful quaintness, were upper, or super-tunics, with no sleeves, or very short ones, bordered with vandyking or scolloping, worked and notched in various patterns; scarfs were worn by knights *à la quintise*, meaning that they were ornamented with a notched border. The *quintise* robe was worn by Queen Eleanor so long before and behind, as to trail on the ground, and was held up with one hand, lest her steps should be impeded. The Roman de la Rose, speaking of these garments first worn by Eleanor and her court, counsels the ladies, if their feet and ankles be not small and delicate, to let their robes fall on the pavement and hide them, whilst those whose feet are of a beautiful form may hold up the robe in front, for the convenience of stepping along briskly. He uncivilly compares the ladies to pies and peacocks, which, he says, "delight in feathers of various colours; so do our court ladies. The pies have long tails that train in the dirt, but the ladies make their tails a thousand times longer than the peacocks and the pies."

Ladies' head-dresses were singularly elegant in the youth and middle age of this beautiful queen; the hair

was gathered up under a golden network, over which was thrown the veil or coverchef. Those women who ventured to walk in the street with only the caul, garland, and bandeaus, without the sheltering veil or coverchef, were deemed improper characters, and liable to insult. The unmarried females wore their hair flowing in ringlets on the shoulders, or, if their tresses were very long and luxuriant, braided in two tails, and tied with ribbons or a knot of gems at the ends. The veil, surmounted with a bandeau, was assumed when they rode or walked in the open air. The queen is sometimes represented with the homely gorget or wimple, in illuminations of that time. The gorget fashion imitated, in cambric or lawn, the knights' helmet, with an aperture cut like the vizor for the face to peep through; and very lovely that face must have been which did not look ugly through so hideous an envelope.

The felicity which the king and queen enjoyed in the magnificent celebration of their daughter's union with the Scottish king, was interrupted by the return of Henry's discarded favourite, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who had passed six years in a sort of honourable banishment, as governor of Gascony. Deputies had been sent from that province with complaints of Leicester's tyrannical conduct, and he, having succeeded in refuting the charges of his Gascon foes, proceeded to call upon the king to reward him for his services, reminding him of his royal promise to that effect. Henry, with infinite scorn, replied, that "he did not consider himself obliged to keep his word with a traitor."

Leicester fiercely told the sovereign "he lied, and were he not his king he would make him eat his words;" adding, "that it was scarcely possible to be-

lieve he was a Christian, or ever had made confession of his sins."

"Yes," replied the king, "I am a Christian, and have often been at confession."

"What signifies confession," retorted the earl, "without repentance?"

"I never repented of anything so much in my life," rejoined the insulted monarch, "as having bestowed favours on one who has so little gratitude and such ill manners."

After this characteristic dialogue, there was nothing but hatred between the king and his insolent brother-in-law.

To add to the troubles of the king and queen at this juncture, even so late as the year 1252, the validity of his marriage with Eleanor was perpetually agitated at the court of Rome, owing to the king's capricious breach of promise with the Countess of Ponthieu;[1] and this year he was forced to obtain bulls at a great expense from Pope Innocent, declaring the contract of the king of England with Joanna (who had been long married to the king of Castile) null and void, and his marriage with Eleanor of Provence good matrimony. In a little time we shall see the heir of Henry and the young daughter of Joanna enter into wedlock.

Henry's temper now became so irascible, that he quarrelled with his best friends; he was impolitic enough to increase the ill-will of the clergy by demanding of them a tenth of their revenues, at a rack-rent for three years, towards the expenses of a projected crusade.

Henry sent for the bishop of Ely, who appeared to have great influence with his brethren, and endeavoured

[1] Fœdera, vol. i.

by flattering caresses to secure his interest; but when that conscientious prelate attempted to reason with him on the folly of his conduct, Henry angrily retorted, "that he did not require any of his counsels," and ordered his officers "to turn him out of doors for an ill-bred fellow as he was."[1]

Louis IX. of France, and the gallant retinue of noble crusaders, by whom he had been attended on his ill-starred expedition to Palestine, were at this time languishing in the most doleful captivity, and the flower of the French chivalry had fallen victims either to the pestilence or the sword. The luxurious Eleanor of Provence talked of accompanying her feeble-minded lord in a crusade for their aid, but it was not probable that she would abandon her painted chambers and jewelled pomp to expose herself to the peril of hardships and privations like those which her sister was suffering at Damietta.

The queen was this year, again, in imminent danger from a thunder storm; she was with her children visiting the abbey of St. Albans when lightning struck the chimney of her chamber and shivered it to pieces. The abbey laundry burst into flames; while such a commotion was raised by the elements that the king's chief justice, (who was escorting two treasure carts, and had accepted hospitality at the abbey) thinking the whole structure was devoted to destruction, rushed forth into the highway, with two friars, and as they went they fancied a flaming torch or a drawn sword preceded them.[2]

The same summer Henry made preparations for going in person to quell the formidable revolt in Guienne, occasioned by the recall of the Earl of Lei-

[1] M. Paris. [2] Hist. of the Abbey of St. Albans.

cester and the misgovernment of Prince Edward, who had been appointed as his successor, in the fourteenth year of his age.

Queen Eleanor, being near her confinement, did not accompany the king, but was solemnly invested by her departing lord with the regency of the kingdom, jointly with his brother Richard Earl of Cornwall, the husband of her sister Sancha of Provence. While Henry was waiting in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth for a favourable wind, he made his will, which is a very interesting document, affording proof of his affection for his queen, and the unbounded confidence which he reposed in her.

HENRY THE THIRD'S WILL.[1]

"I, Henry King of England, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Earl of Anjou, on the Tuesday after St. Peter and St. Paul, in the year of grace 1253, at Southwick,[2] proposing to go to Gascony, I make my will in the form following:—I will that my body be buried in the church of the blessed Edward of Westminster, there being no impediment—having formerly appointed my body to be buried in the New Temple of London. I commit the guardianship of Edward, my eldest son and heir, and of my other children, and of my kingdom of England, and all my other lands in Wales, and Ireland, and Gascony, to my illustrious Queen Eleanor, until they arrive at full age. Also, I bequeath the cross which the Countess of Kent gave me, to the small altar of the aforesaid Church of Westminster."

Though he lived many years after, Henry never made another will.

King Henry, attended by the greater number of his

[1] Nicolas's Testamenta Vetusta. [2] A convent near Portsmouth.

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barons, sailed from Portsmouth, August 6th: he arrived at Bordeaux on the 15th of the same month, and took the command of his army in person.

On the 25th of November, Eleanor gave birth to a daughter in London, who was christened with great pomp by the archbishop of Canterbury, the queen's uncle. That primate, also standing godfather for the infant princess, bestowed upon her the name of Katharine, because she was born on St. Katharine's day. She died very young, and was buried in Westminster Abbey by her two brothers, Richard and John, the third and fourth sons of Henry and Eleanor, who had preceded her to the tomb. These royal children repose in the space between the chapels of St. Edward and St. Bennet.[1]

[1] Speed.

ELEANOR OF PROVENCE.

CHAPTER II.

Eleanor's regency—Great seal of England left in her hands—Unlawful exactions—Disputes with city of London—Assemblies of parliament—Her new year's gift to the king—Goes to Guienne—Her son's nuptials—Feast of kings—Lands in England—Vengeance on the Londoners—Eleanor attends the king to the north—Her sickness at Wark castle—Court at Woodstock—Death of Princess Katharine—Folly of the king—Queen's unpopular conduct—Garrisons Windsor—Prince Edward robs the Templars—Queen pledges jewels—Pelted from London Bridge—Takes sanctuary—Goes to France with the king—Civil war—King and Prince taken at Lewes—Queen raises forces on the continent—Battle of Evesham—Londoners fined—Her return to England—Prince Edward's crusade—Household expenses of the Queen—Death of Henry III.—Eleanor's widowhood—Re-founds St. Katharine's hospital—Death of Eleanor's daughters—Royal letters—Queen retires to Ambresbury—Miracle by Henry III.—Eleanor takes the veil—Visited by King Edward—His dutiful respect—Her death—Petition of Jewish converts.

When Henry III. appointed Eleanor regent of England, he left the great seal in her custody, but enclosed in its casket, sealed with the impression of his own privy seal, and with the signets of his brother, Richard Earl of Cornwall, and others of his council.

Eleanor was directed to govern by the advice of her royal brother-in-law, but the regal power was vested in her; and we find that pleas were holden before her, and the king's council, in the Court of Exchequer, during Henry's absence in Gascony. "At this time,"

says Madox,[1] "the queen was *custos regni* and sat *vice regis*."[2] We have thus an instance of a queen-consort performing not only the functions of a sovereign in the absence of the monarch, but acting as a judge in the highest court of judicature, *curia regis*. There can be no doubt but this princess took her seat on the King's Bench.[3]

No sooner had Queen Eleanôr got the reigns of empire in her own hands, unrestrained by the counterbalancing power of the great Earl of Leicester, who had volunteered his services to King Henry against the insurgent Gascons, than she proceeded to play the sovereign in a more despotic manner, in one instance at least, than had ever been attempted by the mightiest monarch of the Norman line. Remembering her former disputes with the city of London, she now took the opportunity of gratifying her revenge and covetousness at the same time, by demanding of their magistrates the payment of a large sum which she insisted they owed her for *aurum reginæ*, or queen-gold,—a due which the queens of England were entitled to claim on every tenth mark paid to the king, as voluntary fines for the royal good-will, in the renewals of leases on crown lands, or the granting of charters; but Eleanor, in this instance, most unreasonably demanded her queen-gold on various enormous fines that had been unrighteously and vexatiously extorted by the king from the plundered merchants and citizens of London. For the non-payment of this unjust claim Eleanor, in a

[1] Madox. History of Exchequer, chap. ii. p. 47.

[2] History of the Exchequer. Judicature of the king's court.

[3] Placita coram domina regina et consilio domina regis in crastino nativitatis ps Mariae anno 37, Hen. IX. Ex sigula rotulor. anni illius menes Thes. et camerar. Rot. 1. 4.

very summary manner, committed the sheriffs of London, Richard Picard and John de Northampton, to the Marshalsea prison, in the year 1254;[1] and the same year she again committed them, together with Richard Hardell, draper, the mayor, to the same prison, for arrears of an aid towards the war in Gascony.

These arbitrary proceedings of the queen-regent were regarded with indignant astonishment by a city governed by laws peculiar to itself,—London being, in fact, a republic within a monarchy, whose privileges had hitherto been respected by the most despotic sovereigns. It had been hoped that Richard Earl of Cornwall, Eleanor's coadjutor in the delegated regal power, would have restrained her from such reckless use, or rather we should say abuse, of the authority with which she had been invested by her absent lord; but since his marriage with her sister, that prince had ceased to oppose the queen in any of her designs.

The queen and the Countess of Cornwall made common cause, contriving to govern between them the king and his brother, and, through them, the whole realm, according to their own pleasure, whether it were for good or evil.

In the beginning of the year, Eleanor received instructions from the king to summon a parliament, for the purpose of demanding an aid for carrying on the war in Gascony. But finding it impossible to obtain this grant, Queen Eleanor sent the king five hundred marks from her own private coffers, as a new year's gift, for the immediate relief of his more pressing exigencies.[2] Henry then directed his brother to extort from

[1] Stow. Harrison. [2] Stow's Annals.

the luckless Jews the sum required for the nuptial festivities of his heir. As soon as Henry received the glittering fruits of this iniquity, he sent for Eleanor, to assist him in squandering it away in the light and vain expenses in which they mutually delighted, and to grace with her presence the bridal of their eldest son, Prince Edward.[1]

Eleanor, who loved power well, but pleasure better, on this welcome summons resigned the cares of government to the Earl of Cornwall, and, with her sister, the Countess of Cornwall, her second son, Prince Edmund, and a courtly retinue of ladies, knights, and nobles, sailed from Portsmouth on the 15th of May, and, landing at Bordeaux, was joyfully welcomed by her husband and their heir, Prince Edward, whom she had not seen for upwards of a year.

She then crossed the Pyrenees with her son, and having assisted at the solemnization of his nuptials with the infanta Eleanora of Castile, returned with the royal bride and bridegroom to King Henry, who was waiting for their arrival at Bordeaux. Instead of sailing from thence to England, the queen persuaded Henry to accept the invitation of St Louis, her brother-in-law, to pass some days at his court with their train.

At Chartres, Eleanor enjoyed the pleasure of embracing her sister, the Queen of France, who, with King Louis and their nobles, there met and welcomed their royal guests, and conducted them with all due pomp to Paris.[2]

King Henry and Queen Eleanor had in their household train a thousand choice and excellent horses, besides carriages, sumpter-mules, and coursers. King

[1] M. Paris. [2] M. Paris., M. Westminster.

Louis assigned the palace of the Old Temple for the residence of his royal guests; a domicile that could almost furnish accommodations for an army. The morning after their arrival, Henry distributed very abundant alms among the Parisian poor, and made a splendid entertainment for the relatives of his queen, which was, in memory of its magnificence, and the number of crowned heads present, called the Feast of Kings.[1] Contemporary chroniclers record that neither Ahasuerus, Arthur, nor Charlemagne, ever equalled this feast in any of their far-famed doings. King Henry sat at table on the right hand of the King of France, and the king of Navarre on the left. King Louis, with the princely courtesy and meekness which so much characterised the royal saint of France, contended much that the king of England should take the place of honour; but Henry refused to do so, alleging that the king of France was his suzerain, in allusion to the lands which he held of him as a vassal peer of France; on which Louis, in acknowledgment of the compliment, softly rejoined, "Would to God that every one had his rights without offence."[2]

At this memorable entertainment, Queen Eleanor enjoyed the happiness of a reunion with her four sisters and their children, and her mother, the Countess of Provence. After the royal family of England had received, during a sojourn of eight days in Paris, all the honour which the power of the king and the wealth of the fair realm of France could bestow, they took their leave of these pleasant scenes. The king and court of France accompanied them one day's journey.

[1] M. Paris.

[2] M. Paris. The king of France alluded to the detention of Normandy and Anjou, the inheritance of the House of Plantagenet.

Eleanor and her husband landed at Dover on the 5th of January, 1255, and on the 27th made their public entry into London with extraordinary pomp. They received a present of a hundred pounds sterling, which the citizens of London were accustomed to give on such occasions; but as Henry did not seem satisfied, they added a rich piece of plate of exquisite workmanship, which pleased, but certainly did not content, this most acquisitive of all our monarchs, since a few days after he extorted a fine of three thousand marks from them, on the frivolous pretence of the escape of a priest from Newgate who was accused of murder. It was very evident to the citizens that Eleanor had not forgotten their resistance of her illegal exactions, for much strife ensued regarding her claims.[1]

Eleanor, who was probably ambitious of being the mother of as many crowned heads as those by whom she had seen the Countess of Provence proudly surrounded at the feast of kings, was much elated at the pope sending her second son, Prince Edmund, then about ten years old, a ring whereby he professed to invest him with the kingdom of Sicily. But the delight of King Henry at the imaginary preferment of his favourite son exceeded all bounds. He caused a seal

[1] In addition to this imposition, Henry forced the Londoners to pay fourpence a day for the maintenance of a white bear which he kept in the Tower of London, having six years previously commanded the sheriffs of London to provide a muzzle, an iron chain, and a cord, for the use of the said royal pet, while fishing in the river Thames.

Henry appears to have had a mighty predilection for wild beasts. The menagerie at the Tower was formed in his reign, commencing with three leopards, which his brother-in-law, the emperor, presented to him. Then he had an elephant, which was so highly prized by him, that on its decease he issued a writ to the constable of the Tower to deliver the bones of the elephant lately buried in the Tower ditch to the sacristan of Westminster, to make thereof what he had enjoined him to do.

to be made, with the effigies of the young prince enthroned, bearing the sceptre and orb of sovereignty, and crowned with the royal diadem of Sicily;[1] he next prepared to rush madly into an expensive and unpopular war, for the purpose of establishing the chimerical claims of the boy to this shadowy dignity. Henry was only deterred from pursuing his design by rumours of an alarming nature touching the king and queen of Scots; Queen Eleanor having been informed that they were deprived of royal power and kept in close confinement by the regents, Sir John Baliol and the Comyns, who were the next heirs to the Scottish crown. The maternal anxiety of the queen being very painfully excited by these reports, she privately despatched her physician, a person in whose sagacity she could confide, into Scotland, to ascertain the real situation of her daughter. This trusty agent ascertained that the king and queen of Scots were both imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh, but in separate apartments; and having succeeded in gaining a secret interview with the young queen, she gave him a lamentable account of her treatment ever since her marriage; "having been rudely torn," she said, "from her royal husband, and kept apart from him in a doleful damp place, the bad air of which had seriously injured her health; and, so far from having any share in the government, they were treated with the utmost contumely, and were in daily peril of their lives."

While the fate of the young king and queen of Scotland was in suspense, the maternal anxiety of Eleanor was of the most poignant nature. She accompanied her royal lord on a northern campaign, which he under-

[1] Speed.

took on this occasion, constantly urging him to exert himself for the benefit of his child. Before the Earl of Gloucester, whom he had sent to the aid of the young queen, could forward news of his mission into England, Eleanor's trouble of mind brought on a violent illness, and she was confined to her bed at Wark Castle,[1] with small hopes of her life.[2] At last tidings came that Gloucester and Mansel gained admittance into the castle of Edinburgh by assuming the dress of tenants of Baliol the governor, and, in this disguise, they were enabled to give secret access to their followers, by whom the garrison was surprised, and the rescued king and queen restored to each other.

Their cruel jailors, Baliol and Ross, were brought to King Henry at Alnwick to answer for their treasons; but on their throwing themselves at his feet and imploring for mercy, he forgave them; but as Baliol was his own subject he mulcted him in a heavy fine, which he reserved for his own private use.

He then sent for the young king and queen of Scotland to join him at Alnwick, where the king of Scotland

[1] Rymer's Fœdera.

[2] There is among the Tower records a letter from Henry, dated from Wark, September 13th, evidently written while he was yet in suspense as to the result of this affair, enjoining "his dear son Edward of Westminster, and his treasurer, Philip Lovel, by the love and faith they owe him, to keep the feasts of his favourite saint, Edward the Confessor, with all due pomp, the same as if himself were present; and to make an offering in gold for himself, for the queen and the royal children; also that they cause to be touched the silver cross on the great altar at Westminster, and offer a plate of gold weighing one ounce, the same as was customary to be done when the king was present at the mass of St. Edward; and that they cause to come solemnly to Westminster, on St. Edward's day, the procession of the church of St. Margaret, and all the processions of the city of London, with wax-lights, as the king hath commanded the mayor and the honest men of London." Henry concludes with commanding both halls of the palace at Westminster to be filled with poor men and women to be fed at his expense.

solemnly chose him to be his guardian during the rest of his minority.

Queen Eleanor's illness continued to detain her at Wark Castle, even after her mind was relieved of the anxiety which had caused her sickness. Her indisposition and extreme desire of her daughter's company are certified in a letter of King Henry to his son-in-law, the king of Scotland, dated the 20th of September, 1255,[1] in which Henry specifies "that the queen of Scotland is to remain with the sick queen, her mother, his beloved consort, at Wark Castle, till the said queen is sufficiently recovered to be capable of travelling southward."

On Eleanor's convalescence, the king and queen of Scotland accompanied her and king Henry to Woodstock, where she kept her court with more than ordinary splendour, to celebrate their deliverance from their late adversity. There were then three kings and three queens at Woodstock with their retinues.[2] Richard Earl of Cornwall, having obtained his election as successor to the emperor of Germany, had assumed the title of king of the Romans, while his consort Queen Eleanor's sister took also royal state and title.

After exhausting all the pleasures that the sylvan palace of Woodstock, its extensive chase and pleasance, could afford, they proceeded to London, where, in the month of February, the three kings and queens made their public entry, wearing their crowns and royal robes.[3]

All this pomp and festivity was succeeded by a season of gloom and care. The departure of the king

[1] Rymer's Fœdera. [2] Matthew Paris. M. Westminster.
[3] Matthew Paris.

and queen of Scotland was followed by that of the new king and queen of the Romans, who went to be crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle, carrying with them seven hundred thousand pounds in sterling money. A dreadful famine was added to the public embarrassment occasioned by the drain on the specie.

It was at this season of public misery that Eleanor, blinded by the selfish spirit of covetousness to the impolicy of her conduct, chose to renew her demands of queen-gold on the city of London. These the king enforced by writs of exchequer, himself sitting there in person,[1] and compelled the reluctant sheriffs to distrain the citizens for the same.

This year the queen lost her little daughter, the Princess Katharine, whom she had borne to King Henry during his absence in the Gascon war. The king caused a most sumptuous monument to be erected for her in Westminster Abbey.

There is among the Tower records an order to his treasurer and chamberlains of the treasury, to deliver to Master Simon de Wills five marks and a half for his expenses in bringing from London a certain brass image to be set on the royal infant's tomb, and for paying to Simon de Gloucester, the king's goldsmith, for a silver image for the like purpose, the sum of seventy marks.

The ardent desire of the king and queen for the realization of their second son's title as king of Sicily meeting with no encouragement, a little piece of stage effect was devised by the sovereign, by which he foolishly imagined he should move his obdurate barons to grant the pecuniary supplies for his darling project.

[1] Stow's London.

Having caused the young prince to be attired in the graceful costume of a Sicilian king, he at the opening of the parliament presented him to the assembly with the following speech: "Behold here, good people, my son Edmund, whom God of his gracious goodness hath called to the excellency of kingly dignity; how comely and well worthy he is of all your favour, and how cruel and tyrannical must they be, who at this pinch would deny him effectual and seasonable help, both with money and advice!"[1]

Of the latter, truth to tell, the barons were in no wise sparing, since they urged the king not to waste the blood and treasure of his suffering people on such a hopeless chimera; but Henry, who was as firm in folly as he was unstable in well-doing, pertinaciously returned to the charge, notwithstanding the strange insensibility manifested by the peers to the comeliness of the young prince and the picturesque beauty of his Sicilian dress, for which the royal sire, in the fond weakness of paternal vanity, had condescended to bespeak the admiration of the stern assembly. The aid was finally obtained through the interference of the pope's legate, but on condition that the sovereign should consider himself bound by the Oxford statutes. The object of those statutes was to reduce the power of the crown to a mere nominal authority.

With so high a hand did the barons proceed, that at this crisis, when William de Valence, the king's half-brother, sent word to Leicester "that he would not give up his castles which had been bestowed upon him by the king," the stern dictator replied, "Tell him, we will have his castles or his head,"

[1] M. Paris.

One day, as the mortified sovereign was proceeding by water to the Tower, he was overtaken by a tremendous thunder-storm, and in great alarm bade the boatman push for the first stairs, forgetting in his fright that they belonged to Durham-house, where Leicester then dwelt. The earl, with unwelcome courtesy, came to receive his royal brother-in-law as he landed from the boat, telling him at the same time "not to be alarmed, as the storm was spent."

"I am beyond measure afraid of thunder and lightning, but by the head of God I fear thee more than all the thunder in the world," replied Henry, with as fierce a look as he could assume.[1]

To which Leicester mildly rejoined, "My lord, you are to blame to fear your only true and firm friend, whose sole desire it is to preserve England from ruin, and yourself from the destruction which your false councillors are preparing for you."

Henry, far from confiding in these professions, took the earliest opportunity of leaving the kingdom, to seek assistance from the foreign connexions of his queen. In his absence, the king and queen of Scots arrived at Windsor Castle on a visit to Queen Eleanor. A few days after Henry's return, John Duke of Bretagne came over to wed the Princess Beatrice. The Earl of Leicester allowed the king and queen ample supplies for the entertainment of these illustrious guests.[2]

The court at Windsor had never been more numerously attended or more magnificently appointed than on this occasion; but there was a pervading gloom on the mind of the royal parents, which the presence of

[1] M. Paris. [2] T. Wikes. Rapin.

their eldest daughter and the marriage of their second failed to dissipate. The young queen of Scotland passed the whole winter with her mother at Windsor Castle, where she lay in of a daughter.

The state of Henry's mind at the period preceding the barons' war may be gathered from his issuing directions to his painter, Master Williams, a monk of Westminster, to paint a picture for him of a king rescued by his dogs from an attack made upon him by his subjects. Philip Lovel, the king's treasurer, is ordered by this precept, which was issued in the fortieth year of Henry's reign, to disburse to the said Master Williams the full charges and expenses of executing this picture, which is ordered to be placed in the wardrobe of Westminster, where the king was accustomed to wash his head.

At this period, the king and queen chiefly confined themselves within one or other of the royal fortresses of Windsor or the Tower, both of which were strengthened and prepared with additional defences to stand a siege. After Henry had violated the provisions of Oxford he took up his residence in the Tower of London, while Eleanor remained with a strong garrison to keep Windsor. The principal communication between these fortified palaces was by water.

In 1261 died the queen's sister, Sancha Countess of Cornwall and queen of the Romans, for whom the king and queen made great lamentations, and gave her a magnificent funeral.

In that year the royal party gained such strength, that the Earl of Leicester found it most prudent to withdraw to the continent. Prince Edward returned to England, to guard the realm while King Henry went to Gascony, where his presence was required, and

where he fell sick of a quartan ague, which detained him there during the autumn.

While Prince Edward was carrying on the war against the Welch, Leicester's cause became more formidable, and in 1262 that mighty agitator returned almost at the same time with the king, to whom he caused the barons to present an address, requiring him to confirm the Oxford statutes, adding a defiance to all who opposed them, the king, the queen, and their royal children excepted. This exception may be regarded, all things considered, as a very remarkable piece of civility on the part of the reforming barons of the 13th century. One of the most influential of these was Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk and Suffolk, to whom in angry parlance King Henry said, "What, sir Earl, are you so bold with me, whose vassal peer you are? Could I not issue my royal warrant for threshing out all your corn?"

"Ay," retorted the Earl, "and could I not in return send you the heads of the threshers?" [1]

Bold men would they have been who had ventured to undertake that office. A striking instance of the disregard of all moral restraints among the high and mighty in that reign of misery, may be seen in the lawless robbery committed by the heir apparent of the realm on the treasury of the Knights Templars, in the year 1263. Those military monks, it is well known, were not only the masters of great wealth, but acted as bankers and money-brokers to all Europe, lending sums on rich pledges at usurious interest.

Queen Eleanor, at the commencement of the troubles in which her reckless counsels had involved the king,

[1] M. Paris.

had deposited her jewels for security with this fraternity, who had advanced a sum of money upon them. On the return of Prince Edward from his victorious campaign in Wales, finding himself without the means of disbursing the arrears of pay which he owed the troops, and unwilling to disband men for whom he foresaw his father's cause would stand in need, he marched straightway to the Temple, and told the master that it was his pleasure to see the jewels of the queen his mother, as he understood they were not safely kept. On this excuse he entered the treasury, and broke open the coffers of many persons who had lodged their money and pledges for security in the hands of the Templars, and seized ten thousand pounds sterling, principally belonging to the citizens of London, which, together with the queen's jewels, he carried off to the royal fortress of Windsor.[1]

A few months afterwards the queen pawned these jewels a second time to her sister's husband, the king of France; that monarch probably regarding the robbery of the Templars as a very small sin.[2]

The active part taken by Queen Eleanor and her eldest son in the mismanagement of the king's affairs at this critical period, is recorded by Matthew Paris, who is certainly a credible witness, and one who had every means of information on the subject, since, from the great respect in which his talents were held by

[1] Chronicle of Dunmow. Annals of St. Augustine. Rapin. Harrison's Survey of London, &c. &c.

[2] For Louis had permitted his attached friend and follower, the Lord de Joinville, who triumphantly records the fact in his chronicle of the crusade, to break open the treasure-chests of this wealthy fraternity of the church militant at Damietta with a sledge-hammer, and take from thence the sum required to make up his ransom. Joinville's Chronicle, *Vie de St. Louis.*

King Henry, he was invited to dine at the royal table every day, and, as he himself states, frequently wrote in the presence and from the dictation of the king. Neither Henry nor Eleanor were probably aware how oft that sly monk took notes of their foolish sayings and evil doings to enrich his delightful chronicle, for the benefit of distant generations, with many a choice anecdote illustrative of the personal history of royalty in the thirteenth century.

Robert of Gloucester, a contemporary, thus notices the proceedings of the queen, and Prince Edward's political opinions.

"The queen went beyond sea, the king's brethren also
And ever they strove the charter to undo;
They purchased that the pope should assoil, I wis,
Of the oath, and the charter, and the king, and all his.

"It was ever the queen's thought (as much as she could think)
To break the charter by some woman's wrenche;[1]
And though Sir Edward was proved a hardy knight and good,
Yet this same charter was little to his mood."

Many indeed were the wiles and evasions, very inconsistent with the stern and soldier-like plainness of his character in after life, which were practised by the valiant heir of England, while acting under the influence of his insincere mother, in the hope of circumventing the barons by fraud, if not by force.

In this year, notwithstanding the reluctance of the queen,[2] King Henry was induced to sign an amicable arrangement with the barons, by which he bound himself to confirm the provisions of Oxford. This agree-

[1] Pronounced *wronk*, meaning twisting or wrenching the words of Magna Charta from their clear and simple signification.

[2] M. Westminster.

ment, which might have averted the storm of civil strife, was regarded with fierce impatience by some of the destructives of the thirteenth century, who, eager for plunder and athirst for blood, finding they were likely to be disappointed in the object which had led them to rank themselves on the side of the reforming barons and their great dictator Montfort, raised a dreadful uproar in London against the unhappy Jews, whose wealth excited their envy and cupidity.

T. Wikes, a contemporary chronicler, thus details the particulars of this tumult, which was the prelude to a personal attack upon the queen.

At the sound of St. Paul's great bell, a numerous mob sallied forth, led on by Stephen Buckwell, the marshal of London, and John Fitz-John, a powerful baron. They killed and plundered many of these wretched people without mercy. The ferocious leader, John Fitz-John, ran through with his sword, in cold blood, Kokben Abraham, the wealthiest Hebrew resident in London. Besides plundering and killing five hundred of this devoted race, the mob turned the rest out of their beds, undressed as they were, keeping them so the whole night. The next morning they commenced the work of plunder with such outrageous yells, that the queen, who was then at the Tower, seized with mortal terror, got into her barge with many of her great ladies, the wives and daughters of the noblest, intending to escape by water to Windsor Castle. But the raging populace, to whom she had rendered herself most obnoxious, as soon as they observed the royal barge on the river, made a general rush to the bridge, crying "Drown the witch!—drown the witch!"[1] at the same time pelting the queen with

[1] Matthew of Westminster. Wikes. Speed. Rapin.

mud, addressing the most abusive language to her, and endeavouring to sink the vessel by hurling down blocks of wood and stone of an enormous weight, which they tore from the unfinished buildings of the bridge. The poor ladies were pelted with rotten eggs, and sheeps' bones, and everything vile.[1] If the queen had persisted in shooting the arch, the boat must have been swamped, or her vessel dashed to pieces by the formidable missiles that were aimed at her person. As it was, she with difficulty escaped the fury of the assailants by returning to the Tower. Not considering herself safe there, she took sanctuary at night in the bishop of London's palace at St. Paul's, whence she was privately removed to Windsor Castle, where Prince Edward and his troops were. This high-spirited prince never forgave the Londoners for the insult they had offered to his mother.[2]

Though Eleanor had been a most unprincipled plunderer of the Jews, whenever opportunity served, she was accused of patronising them, because great numbers of them had flocked into England at the time of her marriage with King Henry, the Provençal princes having always granted toleration to this people. Eleanor never forgot her terror at London bridge, which had the effect of hurrying forward the civil war. At the time when the barons had agreed to refer their grievances to the arbitration of St. Louis, the brother-in-law of the queen, King Henry took Eleanor with him to France, and left her there in October 1264, with her children, at the court of her sister Marguerite.

[1] Matthew of Westminster. Wikes. Speed. Rapin.

[2] Matthew of Westminster, in his Flowers of History, details this outrage with some spirit, in the Latin of the cloister.

The decision of St. Louis, though really a rational one, did not satisfy the barons, who protested against it on the grounds of family partiality, and England was forthwith involved in the flames of civil war. After Henry had placed his adored queen in security, and taken a tender leave of her and her young children, he returned to England to encounter the storm with more spirit and manliness than was usual to his character.

On Passion Sunday, Henry gained a great victory at Northampton over the barons; he took his rebellious nephew, the Earl of Leicester's eldest son, prisoner, together with fourteen of the leading barons.[1]

Henry used his victory with great moderation.[2] At the castle of Tunbridge, the fair countess of Gloucester, the wife of one of the most inveterate of his foes, fell into his hands, but he generously set her at liberty, with the courteous remark, "that he did not war on ladies."

So well indeed had the royal cause prospered in the commencement of the struggle, that when the rival armies were encamped within six miles of each other, near Lewes, the barons sent word to the king,

[1] In this action, the insurgent students of Oxford, fifteen thousand in number, who fought under the banner of the university against the crown, were the most formidable of Henry's assailants. When victory declared in his favour, the king would have inflicted a severe vengeance on them, had he not been deterred by his counsellors, who in a great fright reminded him, "that these bellicose students were the sons and kindred of the nobles, and magnates of the land, many of them the heirs of his own adherents withal, who had been carried away by the evil example of their companions, or excited by the misdirected ardour of youthful enthusiasm, to swell the ranks of the popular party against him; and if he slew them, their blood would be terribly revenged on him and his, even by those nobles who fought in his cause."

[2] Speed.

that they would give him thirty thousand marks if he would consent to a pacification. Prince Edward, who was burning to avenge the insults which had been offered to the queen his mother, dissuaded Henry from accepting these terms, and the battle of Lewes followed.

> "The king and his meinie were in the priorie,
> When Simon came to field and raised his bannere;
> He shewed forth his shield, his dragon full austere:
> The king said on high, "Simon, je vous defie!"

The battle of Lewes was lost through the reckless fury with which the fiery heir of England pursued the flying Londoners, in order to avenge their incivility in pelting his mother at their bridge. He followed them with his cavalry, shouting the name of Queen Eleanor, as far as Croydon, where he made a merciless slaughter of the hapless citizens. When he returned to the field of battle with his jaded cavalry, he found his father, who had lost the support of all the horse, taken prisoner with his uncle, the king of the Romans, and Edward had no other resource than surrendering himself to Leicester, who conveyed him with King Henry as captive to the castle of Wallingford.

The remnant of the royal army retreated to Bristol Castle, under the command of seven knights, who reared seven banners on the walls. The queen was said by some to be safe in France, but old Robert of Gloucester asserts that she was *espyy*[1] in the land for the purpose of liberating her brave son. Let this be as it may, she sent word to Sir Warren de Basingbourne, her son's favourite knight, one of the gallant defenders of Bristol, that Wallingford was but feebly

[1] Concealed.

guarded, and that her son might be released, if he and the rest of the Bristol garrison would attack it by surprise. Directly Sir Warren received the queen's message, he with three hundred horse crossed the country, and arrived at Wallingford on a Friday, just as the sun rose, and, right against All Hallows church made the first fierce attack on the castle, and won the outermost wall. The besieged defended themselves furiously with cross-bows and battle engines: at last they called out to Sir Warren, that "if they wanted *sire* Edward the Prince they should have him, but bound hand and foot, and shot from the mangonel," a terrific war engine used for casting stones. As soon as the prince heard of this murderous intention, he demanded leave to speak with his friends, and coming on the wall, assured them, that if they persevered in his mother's intentions he should be destroyed. Whereupon Sir Warren and his chevaliers retired in great dejection. Simon de Montfort, pretending to be angry for the violence offered to the prince his nephew, carried of all his royal prisoners for safer keeping to Kenilworth Castle, where Edward's aunt, his countess, was abiding, and who offered her royal brothers and their sons "all the solace she could."

The queen, thus disappointed in the liberation of her gallant heir, soon after found a partisan in a lady strongly attached to her. This was Lady Maud Mortimer. Lord Roger Mortimer had, much against the wishes of his lady, given his powerful aid to Leicester; but having received some affront since the victory of Lewes, he now turned a complacent ear to the loyal pleadings of Lady Maud in behalf of the queen and her son. What all the valour of Sir Warren failed to

accomplish, the wit of woman effected. Lady Maud Mortimer having sent her instructions to Prince Edward, he made his escape by riding races with his attendants till he had tired their horses, when he rode up to a thicket where Dame Maud had ambushed a swift steed. Mounting his gallant courser, Edward turned to his guard, and bade them "commend him to his sire the king, and tell him he would soon be at liberty," and then galloped off; while an armed party appeared on the opposite hill, a mile distant, and displayed the banner of Mortimer.

> "Why should halt a long tale? He off scaped so,
> To the castle of Wigmore, the way soon he took,
> There was joy and bliss enow when he came thither,
> To the lady of that castle, dame Maud de Mortimer."

During the captivity of her husband and son, it is asserted that Eleanor of Provence made more than one private visit to England; but she ostensibly resided in France with her younger children, under the kind protection of her sister, Queen Marguerite.

Immediately the tidings of the disastrous field at Lewes reached Eleanor, she borrowed all the money she could raise on her jewels and credit, and proceeded to muster forces and equip a fleet. Matthew of Westminster does full justice to the energetic efforts of "this noble virago," as he styles Queen Eleanor, for the liberation of her husband. "She succeeded," he says, "in getting together a great army, commanded by so many dukes and earls as seemed incredible; and those who knew the strength and power of that army affirmed, "that if they had once landed in England, they would presently have subdued the whole population of the country; but God in his mercy," continues

the chronicler, "ordered it otherwise;" for, while the queen and her foreign troops remained wind-bound on the other side of the water, the battle of Evesham was fought and won by her valiant son Prince Edward. Leicester had the audacity to proclaim that prince and all his loyal chivalry, traitors to the captive sovereign, for whose deliverance they had displayed their banners.

There are letters in the Fœdera, written during Henry's captivity, addressed by him "to Queen Eleanor abiding in foreign parts," in which he assures her of his health and comfort, and continued affection for her and their children, and of his good hopes of a happy peace being soon established, through the blessing of God, in his dominions. These letters are, however, evidently written under the restraint and dictation of the Earl of Leicester, since the captive monarch desires, nay commands, the queen to "abstain from any attempts to alter the state of things, and charges her to exhort his heir not to interfere in any way against his will, which will be farther explained by Master Edward de Carol, the deacon of Wells, who is the bearer of these missives." They are dated Windsor, 18th of November, 1264.[1]

Eleanor, of course, paid no regard to the forced mandates of her unfortunate consort, but, like a faithful helpmate in the time of trouble, exerted all the energies of her nature for his deliverance. Possessing the pen of a ready writer, she addressed the most persuasive letters to Urban IV. and his legates, setting forth the zeal and obedience her husband had ever shown to the church;[2] she obtained bulls in favour of her party, which were of great service to the royal cause.

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. i. [2] Matthew of Westminster.

The battle of Evesham, was won by a *coup de main*. Leicester mistook Prince Edward's army for that of his own son, Simon de Montfort, which the prince had intercepted and dispersed; and when he had discovered his error, struck with consternation, he exclaimed aloud, "May the Lord have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are the prince's!" Leicester exposed his royal prisoner and former benefactor, King Henry, to the shafts of his own friends, by placing him in the front of the battle. Poor Henry was wounded with a javelin in the shoulder, and was in imminent danger of being slain by one of the royalist soldiers, who, mistaking him for one of Leicester's party, would have cut him down had he not cried out in a lamentable voice, "Slay me not, I am Henry of Winchester, your king." An officer, hearing this, ran to his assistance, rescued him from his perilous situation, and brought him to Prince Edward, who, greeting him with the tenderest affection, knelt and implored his blessing, and then, leaving a strong guard for his protection, pursued his victorious career.[1]

This battle was fought on the 4th of August, 1265,

[1] Robert of Gloucester, in strains of rugged strength, bewails the death of Leicester, and describes the singular darkness which overshadowed the fatal plain of Evesham, "while England's barons fought a field."

"Such was the murther of Evesham, for battle none it was."

He proceeds to say, that the victory was much displeasing to the Saviour, who sent a token of his anger by a darkness over the middle earth, such as befel when he died on the rood. For,

"The while the good men at Evesham were slew,
In the north-west a dark weather arose,
Suddenly swart enow that many men *egros*, (terrified,)
And overcast all through the land, that me might scarcely see,
Grislier weather than it was might not on earth be;
Few drops of rain fell, but they were large enow,
Tokening well through the land when these men were slew,
For thirty mile then. This I saw, (Roberd
That first this book made,) and I was sore afraid."

fourteen months after the defeat and capture of the king at Lewes. Though great provocation had been given to the king and every member of the royal family, there was not a single drop of blood shed on the scaffold after this decisive triumph. Henry, with all his faults and follies, was tender of human life, and mindful that the noblest prerogative of the crown is mercy. Neither is it recorded of Queen Eleanor that she ever caused a sanguinary vengeance to be inflicted on any of her foes. King Henry, however, made the Londoners pay pretty dearly for the pelting they had bestowed on the high and mighty lady his companion.[1] At length he granted a charter of remission for their sins to his consort in these words :—

"Know ye, that in consideration of twenty thousand marks paid to us by our citizens of London, as an atonement for their great crimes and misdemeanours against us, our royal consort, our royal brother, Richard

[1] He divested the city of its ancient charters, caused its posts and chains to be taken away, and ordered the mayor, with a party of the principal citizens, to attend him at Windsor, to confirm the instrument of their own degradation, by affixing the seal of the city to a written form of their submission to the royal mercy. When they arrived at Windsor, they were treated with the utmost contumely by the officers of the royal household, and committed to the custody of the constable of the castle, who shut them up in the keep till the following day, when, as a great favour, they were bestowed in less alarming lodgings, except the mayor and four of the most obnoxious to the royal cause, who were delivered to Prince Edward, and by him subjected to a rigorous confinement till they had paid ransom for their own persons, and consented to petition the king to name a sum as the price of reconciliation with the city of London. Henry, not being a prince to whom *carte blanche* terms could be offered with impunity, demanded the enormous fine of sixty thousand marks. But the luckless citizens pleaded so movingly the impossibility of raising so unreasonable a sum, without involving in utter ruin many families who had been guiltless of all offence against him and the queen, that he was at length induced to moderate his demands to twenty thousand marks.—*Harrison's Survey.*

king of the Romans, and our dear son Edward, that we have, and do, by these our presents, remit, forgive, acquit," &c. &c. &c.

This enormous fine was not paid into the king's exchequer, every farthing of it being devoted to queen Eleanor's use, and by her desire it was transmitted to certain persons in France who had supplied her with money at her need during her exile from England.[1]

As for Henry, he had a rich harvest of fines and confiscations granted by his obliging parliament, from the lands of the rebel barons. The "disinherited," as they were called, who were thus stripped of their patrimony, having nothing more to lose than their lives, raised a fresh revolt under the banner of Simon de Montfort, Leicester's ruined heir, who was also King Henry's nephew.

The consequences of this rebellion were happily averted by the arrival of the queen, who landed at Dover October 29th, 1266, bringing with her the pope's legate, Cardinal Ottobone, whom she had induced to visit England for the purpose of hurling the anathema of the church against the rebel barons. Ottobone accordingly convened a synod, and solemnly excommunicated all the adherents of the late earl of Leicester, whether living or dead, which had a wonderful effect in suppressing the insurrection.

The discontented annalists of the era mention this event by saying that the queen returned with the legate, and that "together they made a great cursing."

Thus did Eleanor see the happy termination of the barons' wars, and was once more settled with her royal partner on the throne of England.

[1] Annals of London. T. Wikes.

In the year 1267 the formidable revolt of the earl of Gloucester occurred. Fortunately for the queen she was at Windsor when his partisans stormed her palace at Westminster, which they sacked, breaking and destroying everything they could not carry away, even to the doors and windows, and making a great slaughter of the royal domestics, who offered some slight resistance. They also did great mischief to the beautiful new-built abbey. Four of these banditti being discovered to be the servants of the Earl of Derby, were by that nobleman's orders tied up in sacks and thrown into the Thames.[1]

It was at this juncture that Prince Edward personally encountered the last adherent of Leicester and overcame him. The queen afterwards proved the benefactress of the gallant outlaw, Adam de Gordon, who was not a Scot, but a Poictevin. We translate from the Latin of Hemingford and Wikes this adventure, so creditable both to Eleanor and her son.

"Edward engaged the brave outlaw, Adam de Gordon, in Alton wood hand to hand, and fairly conquered him in a personal encounter. After granting him his life he brought him to his wife's palace of Guildford, where his mother happened to be that evening, and, introducing him to the queen, pleaded so earnestly for him that Henry III. pardoned this adherent of Leicester, and Eleanor soon after gave Gordon an office at Windsor Castle."

St. Edward's Chapel being now completed, and forming the crowning glory of that sublime *chef d'œuvre* of Gothic architecture, St. Peter's Abbey at

[1] Stow.

Westminster, which Henry III. had been fifty years in building, he, on the 13th of October, St. Edward's day, 1269, assisted by his brother the king of the Romans and his princely sons Edward and Edmund, bore the bier of the royal saint of the ancient line of English sovereigns on his shoulders, and in the presence of his queen and all the nobles of his court placed it in its new station, Queen Eleanor offering a silver image of the Virgin, and other jewels of great value, at the shrine. King Henry reserved the old coffin of St Edward for his own private use, having, with his usual simplicity, an idea that its previous occupation by the royal saint had made it a peculiarly desirable tenement.

Fortunately for the future peace of England, Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, the chief cause of Queen Eleanor's unpopularity, died at Savoy the same year that Prince Edward left England.[1]

From the exchequer rolls of this reign[2] some light is thrown on the domestic usages of royalty in the middle ages. The royal table was, it should seem, chiefly supplied by the sheriffs of the counties or the bailiffs of towns. Thus we find that the sheriff of the counties of Buckingham and Bedford, by the king's command, on one occasion brought four hundred and twenty-eight hens to Westminster for his use. The bailiffs of Bristol provided conger eels, and the sheriffs

[1] Wikes.

[2] Madox's Hist. Exchequer Liberat. 37 H. III. m. 4.

Some of these supplies we know were quit-rents, as the herring pies of Yarmouth and Norwich. The sheriffs in other instances bought the productions for which each locality was famous, and paid themselves out of the crown rents of the county or city.

of Essex, fowls and other victuals. The bailiffs of Newhaven brought lampreys. The sheriff of Gloucester was commanded to cause twenty salmons to be put into his pies against Christmas. The herring pies of Yarmouth and Norwich still form part of their quit-rent to the crown. The sheriff of Sussex was to furnish brawn and other provisions for the royal use. The sheriff of Wiltshire provided oxen, hogs, sheep, fruit, corn, and many other things for the queen, when she was at her dower castle of Marlborough. These requisitions were however by no means confined to eatables. In the thirty-seventh of Henry III.'s reign, the sheriffs of Wiltshire and Sussex were each ordered to buy a thousand ells of fine linen, and to send it to the royal wardrobe at Westminster before the next Whitsuntide; and the linen was to be very fair and delicate in quality. In the forty-second of King Henry the sheriffs of Norfolk and Suffolk were commanded to disburse thirty bezants, to be offered at St. Edmund's shrine, for the king and queen, and their children. The sheriff of Nottinghamshire was enjoined to cause the queen's chamber at Nottingham Castle to be painted with the history of Alexander the Great; and the sheriff of Southampton to cause the image of St. Christopher with our Saviour in his arms, and the image of St. Edward the king, to be painted in her chapel at Winchester.[1]

In one of the Tower rolls, dated Woodstock, April 30th, in the thirty-second year of Henry III.'s reign, that monarch directs his treasurer and chamberlain to pay Master Henry the poet, whom he affectionately

[1] Madox's Hist. Exchcq. Rolls, Memoranda, and Liberat. of that reign.

styles "our beloved Master Henry, the versificator," one hundred shillings, due to him for the arrears of his salary, enjoining them to pay it without delay, though the exchequer was then shut:[1]

In the great roll of the forty-ninth of Henry III. there is a curious account of Queen Eleanor's wardrobe expenses, as rendered by Hugh of the Pen, from the feast of St. Philip and St. James, in the forty-first year of the king her husband, till the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, forty-ninth year, under the control of Alexander de Bradeham, chaplain to the queen. The accounts are of a more creditable nature to Eleanor than might be imagined, when we consider the reckless expenditure of the first years of her marriage.

In the linen department, the butlery, kitchen, scullery, salsary, hall, in feeding the poor, in liveries of garçons, farriery and shoeing of horses, six thousand eight hundred and sixteen pounds. In oblations for holidays, and alms distributed daily, and by the way-

1 From the perusal of the ancient rolls, it appears that a part of the royal revenue was always devoted to alms. This alms was called *Eleemosyna constituta*, or settled alms, and we find that pensions were accustomed to be paid to the servants of the king and queen, when sickness or age incapacitated them from the performance of their respective duties. In the reign of Henry III., the sheriffs of London were commanded to pay unto Richard the carter the penny per day of the king's alms which Nicholas the carpenter used to receive of the sheriffs of that city for the time being. The king granted to Elias de Mileford, for his good service, three halfpence per day during his life; and to Pentecost de Farnham, the king's porter, twopence per day, to be received of the sheriff of Essex, until the king should otherwise provide for him.

In the royal household there was an *Elecmosyna statuta* and *forinseca*, besides what was dispensed in oblations and daily alms by the hands of the king and queen's almoners, in clothing for the poor, and other necessaries sent to them. These alms and charities, with others of the like kind, were disbursed out of the king's wardrobe, and the queen's private charities out of her wardrobe accounts.

side, one hundred and fifty-one pounds and eighteen shillings. In silks, mantles, upper garments, linen hose for her ladies, and other miscellaneous expenses for the wardrobe, a hundred and four-score pounds eleven shillings and twelve-pence halfpenny. In horses purchased, and robes for the queen's family, in mending robes, in shoes, saddles, reins, almonds, wax, and other necessaries for the wardrobe, one thousand six hundred and ninety-one pounds twelve shillings and one penny. In gifts presented to knights, clerks, and other messengers coming to the queen, three hundred and sixty-eight pounds eleven shillings and ten-pence. In secret gifts and private alms, four thousand and seventeen pounds ten shillings and three-pence. In jellies, spices, apples, pears, and other fruit, two hundred and fifty-two pounds sixteen shillings and nine-pence halfpenny. In jewels bought for the queen's use, to wit, eleven rich garlands with emeralds, pearls, sapphires and garnets, of the value of one hundred and forty-five pounds four shillings and fourpence. The sum-total of these expenses is £21,960 3*s*. 7½*d*., and the accomptant acknowledges that he was in surplusage £10,446 3*s*. 3*d*. Thus we see how large a portion of her income Eleanor of Provence devoted to charitable purposes. But the character of this queen undoubtedly improved as she advanced into the vale of years.

When men were indebted to the queen for *aurum reginæ*, the queen herself sometimes respited, pardoned, and discharged the debt as she saw fit.[1] Eleanor of Provence, oppressive and exacting as she

[1] Madox's History of the Exchequer.

was, occasionally exercised this gracious prerogative, as we learn from memoranda contained in the rolls of the Exchequer, where it is recorded that the queen gave respite to Imoyne de Sulleye for thirty marks, which he owed her for *aurum reginæ;* and in the same roll, dated Southampton, it is certified that the queen pardoned Patrick de Chauces a hundred shillings, owed for queen-gold, due on the fine which he paid to the king, to have seisin of the lands that were his patrimony.[1] In the fifth roll there is also record of Thomas son of Aucher having respite of the fine of fifteen marks, due for a trespass in the forest, and of the portion coming to Eleanor.

The nuptials of Queen Eleanor's second son Edmund, Earl of Lancaster and Derby, with the beautiful Aveline, heiress of William Fortibus, Earl of Albemarle, had been celebrated on the 8th of April, 1270, before his departure for the Holy Land. The youthful bride died before his return, in the first year of her nuptials.[2]

Her death was quickly followed by that of the king of the Romans; for grief of which, King Henry fell into the deepest dejection of mind, and having been in person to quell a riot in Norwich, in which great part of the cathedral was burnt, he was attacked

[1] The care of the wards of the crown was occasionally granted to the queen, as we find by a memorandum of Henry III., specifying that queen Eleanor, having the custody of Baldwin de Leisle, her ward, the hereditary chamberlain of the exchequer, she presented Thomas Esperen to the barons to fulfil his duties as deputy chamberlain, and her appointment was confirmed by the king.

[2] She was interred with pompous obsequies in Westminster Abbey, near the altar; her stately monument and effigy adding another ornament to the marvels of sculptured art, with which the exquisite taste of Henry III. had graced that august repository of England's royal dead.

with a mortal sickness at Bury St. Edmund s: but his anxiety to settle the affairs of the kingdom caused him to insist on being carried on to London by short stages. When the dying monarch arrived in the metropolis, finding his dissolution at hand, he summoned Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, into his presence, and made him swear to preserve the peace of England during the absence of Prince Edward. He expired on the 16th of November, 1272, aged sixty-six, having reigned fifty-six years and twenty days. His decease happening in the night, John Kirkeby delivered the royal seal the next morning to Peter of Winchester, keeper of the wardrobe, the Archbishop of York, and the rest of the council.[1]

By the only will King Henry ever made, Queen Eleanor having been appointed regent of England, she caused the council to assemble at the New Temple on the 20th of November, the feast of St. Edmond the martyr and king, where, by her consent[2] and appointment, and the advice of Robert Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Gloucester, and the chief peers and prelates of the realm, her eldest son, Prince Edward, was proclaimed King of England, by the style and title of Edward I.

The remains of King Henry, royally robed and crowned, were, according to his own desire, placed in the old coffin in which the body of Edward the Confessor had originally been interred, and buried near the shrine of that monarch in Westminster Abbey. The knights templars, with the consent of Queen Eleanor, his widow, undertook the care and expense of

[1] Stow. [2] Speed. Sir Harris Nicolas. Chron. Hist.

his funeral, which was very magnificent.[1] They raised a sumptuous monument to his memory, which was afterwards richly inlaid with jasper and precious stones, brought from the Holy Land by his son Edward I. for that purpose.

We copy the translation of his Latin epitaph from Stow.

> "The friend of pity and alms-deed,
> Henry the Third whilome of England king,
> Who this church brake, and after, at his meed,
> Again renewed into this fair building,
> Now resteth here, which did so great a thing."

After the funeral of King Henry, the barons went in solemn procession to the high altar of Westminster Abbey, and swore fealty to their absent sovereign.

In 1273, the widowed queen, on account of some misgovernment,[2] dissolved the old foundation of the hospital of St. Katharine by the Tower, and refounded it in honour of the same saint, for a master, a chaplain, three brethren, three sisters, ten bedeswomen, and six poor scholars.[3]

The pope addressed a pastoral letter of condolence to Eleanor on the death of the king her husband; it is written jointly to her and King Edward, whom he felicitates on his accession, and requests Eleanor to give him the letter on his return.

Soon after his return Edward I. was forced to rectify a wrong committed by his mother, which was much in the style of her former acts of rapacity. Just before the death of her husband she had persuaded him to grant her the custody of London bridge for six years. Before

[1] Harrison's Survey.
[2] Pennant's London. [3] Ibid.

that term was expired, the citizens found their new-built bridge was suffering great injury, "for," they declared, in their supplication to the king, "the said lady queen taketh all the tolls, and careth not how the bridge is kept."[1] Edward I. soon put an end to his mother's unconscientious proceedings.

Eleanor of Provence lost her husband and daughter in one year; for scarcely had the tomb closed over the mortal remains of her royal lord ere she was called upon to mourn the death of her eldest daughter, Margaret Queen of Scotland. This lady had come to pay her mother a dutiful visit of condolence on the death of the king her father, and died in England in the thirty-third year of her age, and the twenty-second of her marriage, leaving only one daughter, who was married to Eric, king of Norway, and was the mother of the Maid of Norway, heiress of Scotland.

But the rejoicings and festivities of the coronation of Edward I. received a melancholy interruption in consequence of the death of the Duchess of Bretagne, who came with her lord to witness the inauguration of her royal brother, and died very unexpectedly a few days afterwards, in the thirtieth year of her age, greatly lamented by her illustrious consort, and by her mother Queen Eleanor. Matthew of Westminster says she was a princess of great beauty and wit.[2]

[1] Stowe's London.

[2] There is a letter in the first volume of the Fœdera, from Blanche Duchess of Bretagne, the mother-in-law of this princess, addressed to Henry III., in which there is affectionate mention made of Beatrice and her eldest son. We transcribe the letter, as affording one of the earliest specimens of familiar correspondence between royal personages in the middle ages. After the usual superscription to her very high and very dear lord Henry, by the grace of God, king of England, &c. &c., she commences:—

"Sire, I pray you that you will be pleased to inform us of your state,

Queen Eleanor and Edward I. preserved a great regard for the Duke of Bretagne after the decease of Lady Beatrice.

There is a letter in the second volume of the Fœdera from Eleanor, during her widowhood, to the king her son, in which she appears to take a lively interest in the welfare of her son-in-law. It is thus headed:—

"LETTER OF ALIANORA, THE MOTHER OF THE KING, FOR JOHN DUKE OF BRETAGNE, WHILE TRAVELLING IN A FAR COUNTRY.[1]

"Alianor, by the grace of God, queen of England, to the king our son, health with our benison.

"Inasmuch as our son, John of Bretagne, is in a foreign land, and requires of me as his mother, and you as his lord, some recommendation, our Sir John de Maurre (his seneschal in England) ought to go to La Doure quickly to hear certain tidings of his lord.

"We pray and require that you would grant this, as *my* Sir Nicol de Stapleton can attend to his wants in this country, and we wish that you would send your letter by him, as he will understand it, for he will not go without your especial command; and we pray you that you will do it quickly, and, if you will please to give the power by your letter that he may have *attorne*,[2] where he pleases, the same as you granted to the Sire de Dreux, his brother.

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which may our Lord of his grace make always good; for know, my dear lord, that I have great joy at all times in having good news of you.

"Know, sire, that my Lady Beatrice, your dear daughter and ours, is still sick of her fever, but is much better, God be thanked, and her physicians tell us that her fever cannot last long.

"I pray you, my dear lord, if we have anything in our parts that you would like me to send, to inform me; for know, sire, that I shall have very great joy if I can do anything for you. And know, sire, that Arthur is good and very beautiful, God be thanked! Our Lord have you in his care."

This letter is dated 1265, and is written in old French. There is also a letter in Latin from the young Duchess Beatrice to the king her father, on the same page of the Fœdera, written at the time of this illness, which she says is a quartan fever or ague, and entreats her father not to distress himself on account of her indisposition.—She had six children by the Duke of Bretagne, with whom she lived happily twelve years. She was buried in the church of the Grey Friars.

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. ii. p. 221.

[2] Suppose attorney letters of pecuniary credit.

"And excuse Sir John de Maurre that he cannot make his *congé* to you before he departs, for he cannot do it on account of haste. We commend you to God.

"Given at Lutgershall, 8th day of October."

It is probable that Eleanor was suffering from some kind of sickness in the year 1275, for we find in the Fœdera a protection granted by Edward I. "to Master William, the Provençal *physico* to the queen-mother, whom the said queen had procured to come to her from beyond seas." It is especially provided in this protection, "That the Provençal physician is to be left in quiet at all times and places, save that he is to be answerable for any debts that he may contract in this country."

It has been generally asserted that Eleanor of Provence retired to the nunnery of Ambresbury soon after the coronation of her son Edward I.; but this does not appear to have been the case, for several of her precepts and letters are dated from Waltham, Guildford, Lutgershall, and other places. She retired to Ambresbury as a residence in 1280, but she did not take the veil till four years afterwards.

There is an original letter from Queen Eleanor to her son King Edward, dated from Waltham.

"Alianore, by the grace of God, queen of England, to our dear son the king, health and our blessing.

"We have sent your prayer to the king of France, that he may lend his aid in purchasing our share of the land of Provence.[1] We have done the letter for you, which you sent to us, and we pray you to hear it read, and if

[1] Rymer, vol. ii.

[2] From this letter it appears that the surviving co-heiresses of Provence, of whom our Eleanor was one, compounded their rights for money to their young sister, who by the will of their father Berenger, was to succeed to the sovereignty of that district. This sister, Beatrice, was the wife of the brother of St. Louis, Charles of Anjou, in whose line the beautiful county of Provence descended to France by the father of our unhappy queen, Margaret of Anjou.

it please you, have it sealed, and if not, that you would be pleased to command it to be amended and sent forthwith to your aunt, my Lady of France. We also entreat you that you would send to Mestre Bonet, your clerk, that he would show and advance this request in the court of France as much as he can. We commend you to God.

"Given at Waltham, 8th day of July, 1282."

The four younger sons of Queen Eleanor, Richard, John, William, and Henry, all died before the king their father; so that, of her nine children, her two sons only were surviving at the time she retired to Ambresbury. In the year 1280 her son King Edward visited her there, when he was on his march to Wales. Queen Eleanor then showed him a man who said he had received his sight through the miraculous interposition of the late king his father, in consequence of having offered up his prayers at his tomb.

Edward, whose sound judgment taught him to regard the legend with the contempt its falsehood merited, entreated his mother not to bestow her patronage on a base impostor, whom a prince of his father's piety and justice would certainly rather have punished with loss of speech for his hypocrisy, than restored to sight, had he indeed possessed the power of doing either.[1]

Two years after this date, King Edward again visited his widowed mother in her monastic retreat. Her profession as a nun did not take place till the year 1284, when she was solemnly veiled in the church of Ambresbury; and according to the words of her contemporary Wikes, "she laid down the diadem from her head and the precious purple from her shoulders, and with them all worldly ambition." She persuaded her young grand-daughter, the Princess Mary, the fifth daughter of Edward I. and his queen Eleanor of

[1] M. Westminster. T. Wikes.

Castile, to take the vows at the same time, together with Eleanor, daughter to the deceased Duchess of Bretagne.

Queen Eleanor, though bent on a conventual life, had delayed her profession till she could obtain the pope's licence to keep her rich dowry as queen-dowager of England.[1]

She received the tenderest attention and respect from her son King Edward, who regarded her with great affection; and once, when he was going to France to meet the king his cousin on a matter of the greatest importance, and had advanced as far as Canterbury on his journey, receiving intelligence of the sudden and alarming illness of his mother, he instantly gave up his French voyage and hastened to her.

Matthew of Westminster mentions the profession of Queen Eleanor as taking place in the year 1287, in the following terms:—"That generous virago, Ælianora queen of England and mother of the king, took the veil and religious habit at Ambresbury on the day of the translation of St. Thomas, the archbishop of Canterbury, having obtained leave of the pope to keep possession of her dower in perpetuity, according to her wish."

After Queen Eleanor's profession, her uncle, Philip earl of Savoy, applied to her and her son King Edward, requesting them to choose from among his nephews a successor to his dominions, as he was himself childless, and distracted by the intrigues and quarrels of the rival claimants.[2]

There is a long letter in the Fœdera on this subject, addressed jointly to Eleanor, the queen-mother, and

[1] T. Wikes. Annals of Waverley. [2] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. ii.

King Edward her son, by the dying earl, in which he entreats them to decide for him, and "declares that his bishops and nobles are willing to recognise whomsoever they may think proper to appoint for his heir."

Queen Eleanor is in the following year named as executor to Philip of Savoy's last will and testament jointly with her son King Edward. The testator, with many compliments to "the wisdom, prudence, affection, and, more than that, the good faith and probity of the queen and her son, commits the disposal of all his personal property to be by them divided between all his nephews and nieces."[1]

It appears that Amadeus, the son of the deceased Thomas of Savoy, earl of Flanders, was the sovereign chosen by Queen Eleanor and her son King Edward, to succeed to the dominions of her dying uncle.

When Eleanor's life was fast ebbing away, and she lay moaning with pain on her sick-bed, it is recorded that she gave excellent counsel to her son, regarding a very perplexing affair which had just happened at his court. Edward had given refuge to a state-prisoner who had escaped from the Châtelet in Paris. This Frenchman was a literary character, and named Thomas de Turbeville. It turned out that Turbeville was in reality a spy, a clerk of the king's council having intercepted a letter, in which the ungrateful man described the best place for seizing King Edward and taking him prisoner to France. Turbeville, being fully convicted of treason, was condemned to be executed; "but," says Piers, from whom we draw the story, "he had drede to die," and sent the king word that he was willing to confess who had instigated the

[1] Rymer's Fœderas vol. ii.

crime, as several great men at court were implicated in the attempt. Thomas was therefore respited till the king's pleasure was known. The dutiful monarch was watching by the bedside of his aged mother when the message was delivered, "that a confession regarding accomplices, usually extorted by torture, was voluntarily offered by Thomas surnamed Troubletown," the literal interpretation of the name of Turbeville. But the dying queen-mother seeing, perhaps, the things of this world by the light of that which was approaching, offered advice full of wisdom on the subject.

At Ambresbury the king
With his moder was,
When to him came tiding
Of Troubletown Thomas.
They told him a deal
Thomas would say to him,
To warn him full well
Which were his traitors grim;
His moder Eleanore
Abated her great bale,[1]
"Son," said she, "never more
Trow the traitor's tale;
Traitors such as he,
For hate will make a lie,
And through each word will be
Vengeance and felony.
Son, on my blessing
Trow you not his saw,
But let him have ending
As traitor by law."

Edward took this wise advice, and Turbeville died without his confession being required; a proceeding which saved the king from many tormenting suspicions regarding the fidelity of his servants.

Eleanor of Provence survived the king her husband nineteen years. She died at the nunnery of

[1] Ceased from moaning with pain.

Ambresbury, June 24th, during the absence of her son in Scotland. Thomas Wikes thus records the particulars of her death and burial in his Latin chronicle. "The fleeting state of worldly glory is shown by the fact, that the same year carried off two English queens, wife and mother of the king, both inexpressibly dear to him. The nuns of Ambresbury, not being able to sepulture the queen-mother with sufficient magnificence, had her body embalmed, so that no corruption ensued, and in a retired place reverentially deposited it, till Edward returned from his Scottish campaign. On the king's return he summoned all his clergy and barons to Ambresbury, where he solemnly completed the entombing of his mother, on the day of the nativity of the blessed Mary, in her conventual church, where her obsequies were reverently celebrated. But the heart of his mother King Edward carried with him to London; indeed he brought there the hearts of both the queens;[1] and on the next Sunday, the day of St. Nicholas, before a vast multitude, they were honourably interred, the conjugal heart in the church of the Friars Preachers, and the maternal heart in that of the Friars Minors[2] in the same city."

Among the parliamentary rolls we meet with a remarkably pitiful petition from the converted Jews, patronised by Dame Alianor, companion of King Henry III., setting forth that their converts had been promised two hundred and two pounds and four-pence from the exchequer for their sustenance, which had not been

[1] This implies that he had carried the heart of his beloved consort with him to Scotland.

[2] Commonly called the Minories. Those authors are mistaken who say she is buried in St. Edward's Chapel; there is no memento of her in Westminster Abbey.

received by them; and that the poor converts prayed their lord King Edward I. to grant the same, seeing that the said poor converts prayed indefatigably for the souls of the late King Henry and the Queen Eleanor his companion, on whom God have mercy; therefore they hope the said sum may be paid by the treasurer for the sustenance of the converts. "For God's sake, sire, take pitie!" is the concluding sentence of this moving supplication.

Queen Eleanor survived to see the conquest of Wales and the contract of marriage between her grandson Edward of Caernarvon, the heir of England, and her great-grand-daughter, Margaret the heiress of Scotland and Norway, through which a peaceful union of those realms with England, Ireland, Wales, Aquitaine, and Ponthieu, was contemplated; an arrangement which promised to render her descendants the most powerful sovereigns in Europe.

ELEANORA OF CASTILE,

SURNAMED THE FAITHFUL,

FIRST QUEEN OF EDWARD I.

Eleanora Infanta of Castile—Descent — Inheritance — Marriage-treaty—Queen-mother and Prince Edward visit Spain—Eleanora's marriage at Burgos—Journey to England — Feast at Tothill—Eleanora retires to France—Returns to England—Sons born—Crusade—Eleanora prepares to share it—Arrives at Acre — Edward's wound — Assassin—Grief of Eleanora—Prince Edward's illness—His will—Birth of Joanna of Acre —Death of Eleanora's sons—Of King Henry—Queen Eleanor visits Rome—Birth of an heir at Maine—Providential escape of king and queen—Land at Dover—Coronation—War—Marriage of Llewellen—Eleanora assists at nuptials—War renewed—Eleanora shares Edward's campaigns—Keeps court at Rhuddlan—Princess born in Wales—Caernarvon Castle—Queen's chamber—The Eagle tower—Birth of Prince Edward—Death of Prince Alphonso—Queen at Guienne—Birth of younger daughters—Queen's plate—Edward departs for the north—Eleanora follows him—Sudden death—King returns—His extreme grief—Follows her corpse — Solemn mourning — Burial—Tomb — Epitaph—Crosses to Eleanora's memory—Traits of the times—Eleanora's improvements—Her creditors—Prayers for her soul—Her children.

THE marriage of the infanta Donna Eleanora of Castile with Prince Edward, heir of England, happily terminated a war which her brother, King Alphonso, surnamed the Astronomer,[1] was waging with Henry III. on account of some obsolete claims the Castilian monarch laid to the province of Gascony.[2]

[1] He was the celebrated royal philosopher who invented the Alphonsine tables of astronomy. His countrymen called him El Sabio, or the Wise.

[2] He pretended that Henry II. had settled this province on his daughter Eleanora, queen of Castile.

Alphonso had invaded Guienne, but, contrary to his usual fortune, Henry III. had the best of the contest, and the royal Castilian was glad to make overtures for peace. Henry, who had not the least gall of bitterness in his composition, and was always more willing to promote a festival than continue a fray, luckily recollected that Alphonso had a fair young sister to dispose of, whose age would just suit his heir, Prince Edward. He therefore despatched his private chaplain, the Bishop of Bath, with his secretary John Mansel, from Bourdeaux, to demand the hand of the young Infanta as a pledge of her brother's placable intentions. These ambassadors speedily returned with Don Alphonso's consent, inscribed in a scroll sealed with gold.[1] Alphonso stipulated that the English prince should come to Burgos, to receive the hand of his bride, five weeks before Michaelmas-day, 1254; otherwise the contract should be null and void.

The stipulation was not unreasonable, for both the mother and grandmother of the bride had been long engaged to English princes, who had broken their troth.

The King of Castile was but half-brother to the young Donna Eleanora. She was the only child of Ferdinand III. of Castile, by Joanna Countess of Ponthieu, who had been many years before contracted to Henry III., King of England. Joanna inherited Ponthieu from her mother, that Princess Alice of France, whose betrothment with King Richard, Cœur de Lion, in the preceding century, had involved Europe in war. Eleanora, as the sole descendant of these princesses, was heiress presumptive to Ponthieu and Aumerle, which provinces

[1] Preserved in the Chapter House at Westminster. (Rapin.)

the royal widow of Castile, her mother, retained in her own possession.

When the preliminaries of the marriage were settled, the Queen of England, Eleanor of Provence, set out for Bourdeaux with her son Prince Edward, and from thence travelled across the Pyrenees with him to Burgos, where they arrived August 5th, 1254, within the time limited by the royal astronomer.

A stately festival was held in the capital of Castile, in honour of the nuptials of the young Infanta with the heir of England. At a tournament given by King Alphonso, the prince received knighthood from the sword of his brother-in-law. Edward was just fifteen, and the princess some years younger,[1] at the time of their espousals.

After the chivalric festivities at Burgos had ceased, Queen Eleanor re-crossed the Pyrenees, accompanied by her son and young daughter-in-law. King Henry waited at Bordeaux to receive his son's bride.[a] He had prepared so grand a festival for the reception of the young Infanta, that he expended three hundred thousand marks on her marriage-feast, to the indignation of his English peers. When one of them reproached him for this extravagance, the king replied, in a dolorous tone,

"O! for the head of God say no more of it, lest men should stand amazed at the relation thereof!"

Henry settled on the prince, his heir, all the Aquitanian domains inherited from Eleanora his grandmother; he likewise created him Prince of Wales, with an exhort-

[1] She is mentioned by all chroniclers as a very young girl. Piers of Langtoft, her contemporary, speaks of her as a child. Her age seems about ten at this period. Robert of Gloucester, Piers, and Matthew Paris, are the authorities for the events of this marriage.

[a] Matthew Paris.

ation to employ his youth in conquering the principality, of which he and his princess, rather prematurely, assumed the title, together with that of Guienne. One thousand pounds per annum was the dower settled on the young Eleanora, in case the prince should die before his father.

Henry III. ordered a suite of rooms to be fitted up for his daughter-in-law in the castle of Guildford; his directions particularly specify that her chamber is to have glazed windows, a raised hearth, a chimney, a wardrobe, and an adjoining oratory or oriel.[1]

The young princess accompanied the royal family to England through France, and at Paris was lodged. in the Temple, where Henry III. gave that celebrated banquet to St. Louis, mentioned in the preceding memoirs as the feast of kings. High festivals and honours were prepared for her reception in England. The most noted of these was the grand entertainment given by the secretary of state, John Mansel, a priest, to King Henry, Queen Eleanora, the bride of Prince Edward, the prince himself, the king and queen of Scotland, with such numbers of their retinue, that John Mansel's house at Tothill could not hold half the company; they were lodged in tents and green booths set up round the mansion.[2] Seven hundred messes of meat were served up at this dinner.

Prince Edward and his young bride passed over to Bourdeaux in 1256; and while Eleanora was completing her education, the young prince led the wandering life of a knight-errant, "haunting tournaments" wherever they were given.[3] He was at Paris, tilting at a very

[1] Stow's London. [2] Pictorial History of England.
[3] Piers of Langtoft.

grand jousting-match in 1260, when news was brought him of the violent dissensions between the English barons and his father, which led to the fearful civil war that convulsed England for more than three years. During the whole of that disastrous era, his young princess resided in France with the rest of the royal family, either with Queen Marguerite of France, or with her own mother at Ponthieu.

After the heroic efforts of Prince Edward had freed his father and restored him to his throne, and the country breathed in peace after the dreadful strife at Evesham, the royal ladies of England ventured to return. On the 29th of October 1265, Eleanor of Provence, queen of England, with her daughter-in-law Eleanora of Castile, landed at Dover,[1] where they were received by King Henry III. and Prince Edward; from thence they were escorted to Canterbury, where the royal party was magnificently entertained by the archbishop.

Prince Edward had left his wife an uninformed girl; she was now a lovely young woman of twenty, to whose character the uncertainty of fortune had assuredly given a favourable bias. The prince conveyed his restored wife to St. John's, Smithfield, after a magnificent welcome by the citizens. Eleanora afterwards removed to the palace of the Savoy,[2] which had been originally built by Count Peter of Savoy, her husband's uncle, and afterwards purchased by Eleanor of Provence as a London inn or residence for the younger branches of her family. This was the abode of Eleanora of Castile when she attended the court at Westminster, but her favourite residence was the castle of Windsor. Here her eldest child was born the year after her return to England; he

[1] Wikes. [2] Grafton. Stow.

was named John, after his grandfather of evil memory. In the succeeding year, 1266, Eleanora gave birth at Windsor to a princess named Eleanora, and the year after to Prince Henry. The beauty of these children, and their early promise, so much delighted their royal grandfather, that he greatly augmented the dower of the mother.

Prince Edward took up the cross in 1269, and his virtuous princess resolved to share the perils of his Syrian campaign. Before she departed from England, she accompanied her mother-in-law in a grand progress to various shrines. During the royal progress to Northampton, the Princess Eleanora made a pilgrimage to Dunstable, in company with Queen Eleanor, and offered at the shrine of St. Peter an altar-cloth of gold brocade, as a thanksgiving for the health of her children. On her return she assisted at a magnificent convocation of the barons of England in Westminster Hall, where they swore fealty and kissed the hand of her little son Prince John, and recognised him as his father's successor, in case of the death of Edward in the ensuing crusade.

A contemporary historian[1] has left us a very graphic portrait of the husband of Eleanora at this period of his life. "He was a prince of elegant form and majestic stature, so tall that few of his people reached his shoulder. His ample forehead and prominent chest added to the dignity of his personal appearance. His arms were most agile in the use of the sword, and his length of limb gave him a firm seat on the most spirited horses. His hair was light before his eastern campaigns, but became dark in middle life. His left eyebrow had a slightly oblique fall, giving a shade of resemblance to

[1] Hemingford.

his father's face, in whose portrait this defect is very strongly marked. The speech of Edward was sometimes hesitating, but when animated was passionately eloquent." His disposition, which Eleanora of Castile had the sole merit of softening and reforming, was naturally a fiery one, but generous when opposition ceased.[1]

In vain did the ladies of Eleanora represent to her the hardships and dangers ever attendant on a crusade, for death on the Asiatic coast threatened in many forms beside the sword. The princess replied in words that well deserve to be remembered and noted. "Nothing," said this admirable lady, "ought to part those whom God hath joined, and the way to heaven is as near, if not nearer, from Syria as from England or my native Spain."[2]

[1] Walsingham relates a circumstance of Prince Edward, which took place before the Syrian campain; it is an anecdote that casts some light on his character. "Hawking one day on a river, he saw one of his barons not attending to a falcon that had just seized a duck among the willows. Prince Edward upbraided him for his neglect; and the noble tauntingly replied, it was well for him that the river parted them. Stung by the remark, the prince plunged into the stream, though ignorant of its depth, and having with difficulty reached the opposite side, pursued the noble lord with his drawn sword, who, seeing escape hopeless, turned round his horse, flung off his cap, and advancing to Edward threw himself on his mercy, and offered his neck to the blow: this submission disarmed the prince; he sheathed his sword, and rode home quietly with the offender."

An accident that happened to the prince just before the Syrian campaign gave a devotional turn to his mind. One day, when he was playing at chess at Windsor with a knight, the prince suddenly, from an impulse, rose from his game without any motive or decided purpose which he could define even to himself; the next moment the centre stone of the groined ceiling above him fell on the very spot where he had been sitting. From this accident he believed himself to be under the special protection of Providence, and reserved for some great purpose; he attributed his preservation to our Lady of Walsingham. Why that Norfolk shrine was connected with his preservation, the chronicle does not inform us; but from that time this English Lady of Loretto was beset with votaries.

[2] Camden's Remains.

Much has been said regarding the conjugal fidelity of Prince Edward. But previously to his Syrian campaign he was impetuous and wilful in character, and far from a faultless husband. He had inspired the Earl of Gloucester with a mad jealousy,[1] who not only accused him of criminal intimacy with his countess, but declared that he, the Earl of Gloucester, had been poisoned by the agency of Prince Edward and the faithless countess. This intrigue had commenced before the reunion of Eleanora with her husband in 1264; but its effects convulsed the court with broils till the princess left the court and all its turmoils in the spring of 1270; when she bade farewell to the two lovely boys she never saw again, and sailed for Bourdeaux, where she superintended the preparations for the crusade-campaign.[2]

Edward sailed from Portsmouth about a month later and met his consort at Bourdeaux; they proceeded to Sicily, where they sojourned during the winter, with the expectation that St. Louis, the King of France, would unite in the crusade. Soon after their arrival tidings were brought of the death of St. Louis at Tunis and the discomfiture of his army.

The King of Sicily, who was brother to St. Louis and husband to Edward's aunt, endeavoured to persuade his royal guests to give up their crusading expedition; whereupon Prince Edward struck his breast, and exclaimed with energy,

"Sangue di Dieu, if all should desert me,[3] I would lay siege to Acon, if only attended by Fowen, my groom!"

The following spring Edward and Eleanora arrived at

[1] Stow's Chronicle. [2] Matthew of Westminster.
[3] W. Rishanger; likewise M. Paris.

Ptolemais. The prince made an expedition as far as Nazareth,[1] and put all the garrison to the sword; and when the Saracens came to their rescue, he engaged the infidel army, and defeated them with great slaughter. He won another battle, June 1271, at Cahow, and thus terminated his first and second campaign. He returned to Cyprus for the winter, and, being reinforced by the Cypriots, undertook the siege of Acre the succeeding summer, still attended by his faithful Eleanora.

The emir of Joppa, who was the Saracen admiral, pretending that he was desirous of becoming a christian convert, had sent a messenger several times with letters to the Prince of England. This envoy was one of the agents of the Old Man of the Mountains, who kept a band for secret murders, called Assassins. After the cunning fanatic had created a confidence in Edward's mind by frequent messages, he was introduced into the royal chamber, bringing letters for the fifth time from the emir. The prince was indisposed from the heat of the climate, and was lying on his bed barcheaded, wearing only a white vest. The assassin gave him some letters to read, written on purpose to please the christian prince. They were alone in the apartment, because the negotiation touched the life and honour of the admiral of Joppa, therefore secrecy was imperatively needful. The assassin pretended that he had another paper to deliver, but he drew out with it a poniard, and aimed a blow at the side of the prince as he lay before him on the bed. Fortunately Edward perceived the treachery, and, suddenly raising his arm, received the blow upon it. The assassin endeavoured to reiterate

[1] Knolles' History of the Turks.

the stroke, but Edward, who seems not yet to have risen from his recumbent posture, felled him to the ground with a kick on the breast: again the assassin returned to the attack, and the prince finally killed him with a tressel or stool that stood by. The attendants of the prince, hearing the scuffle, came running in, when his harper or minstrel beat out the assassin's brains, whereat the prince sternly reproached him, asking, "what was the use of striking a dead man?"

The wound in the arm of the prince after some days began to show unfavourable symptoms, and the flesh blackening exhibited signs of mortification; insomuch that all about him began to look heavily upon each other.

"Why whisper ye thus among yourselves?" said the prince; "what see ye in me? Tell the truth, and fear not!"

Then, Hemingford[1] declares, that the master of the Temple recommended incisions, which would be exquisitely painful.

"If suffering," said the prince to the surgeon, brought to him by the master of the Temple, "may again restore my health, I commit myself to you; work on me your will, and spare not."

Eleanora was by his bedside at this dreadful crisis; she lost her firmness, and bewailed with a passion of tears the anguish about to be inflicted on her husband.

Edward, with his usual decision of character, cut short the agony of his wife, by bidding his brother Edmund and his favourite knight John de Vesci carry the princess out of the room. They took her in their arms, and bore her from the apartment, she shrieking

[1] Walter Hemingford's Chronicle.

and struggling all the time, till her brother-in-law told her "that it was better that she should scream and cry, than all England mourn and lament."[1]

The surgical operation was effectual; in fifteen days Edward was able to mount his horse, though his health was long in a precarious state. He always attributed his final recovery to the tender care and attention of Eleanora. But if there had been any truth in the story of her sucking the poison from his wound,[2] relaters of the scene, who have entered into its details so minutely, would not have forgotten the circumstance.

While yet in ill health, Prince Edward made his will.[3] With a philosophy rare at this era, he leaves his body to be buried wherever his executors please.

To his principal executor, his brother-in-law and fellow-crusader, John of Brittany, he leaves the guardianship of his children, if he should die before they come of age. He provides for the dowry of his dear wife Eleanor, but does not leave her either guardian to the realm in reversion or to her children.

Scarcely was the prince recovered from his wound when Eleanora brought into the world an infant princess, named Joanna, and called, from the place of her birth, Joanna of Acre.[4]

[1] Knighton and Hemingford.

[2] The story is only to be found quoted by Camden, as recorded by Sanctius, a Spanish historian, who introduced it in a comment he wrote on the works of Roderigo Toletus. Sanctius lived a hundred and fifty years after the siege of Acre, and does not bear the weight of Walter Hemingford, who mentions Eleanora, but does not allude to this event.

[3] Sir Harris Nicolas. Testamenta Vetusta. Edward left no other will.

[4] This princess is the first instance of a misalliance in the royal house of Plantagenet. After the death of her first husband, she stole a match with one of his retainers, Ralph Monthermer, called by some authors his groom, but he was in reality his squire. Joanna was in 1306 forgiven by her father, on account of the valour her second husband had shown in the Scottish wars. The bishop of Durham was the mediator in this reconciliation.

The next remarkable event that happened at Acre, while Eleanora remained there with her royal lord, was, that a pope was chosen in a manner out of their household. Theobald, archbishop of Liege, who attended the royal pair on their crusade, was in his absence elected to the papal throne, which he ascended under the name of Gregory X. This pontiff had been the tutor of Prince Edward.

The army of the prince being reduced by sickness, want, and desertion, he considered that it was useless to tarry longer in Syria. Leaving behind him a reputation not inferior to that of his great uncle, Cœur de Lion, Edward turned his back most reluctantly on the Holy Land; and with his princess and her infant daughter arrived safely at Sicily, where heavy tidings awaited them.

The news first reached them that Prince John, their lovely and promising heir, whose talents were unequalled for his years, had died August 1, 1272. Scarcely had the princess and her husband received this intelligence, when they heard of the death of their second son, Prince Henry; and a third messenger brought the news to Messina that King Henry III. was dead, and that Prince Edward was now Edward I. of England. The firmness and resignation with which Eleanora and Edward bore the loss of their promising boys surprised every one at the Sicilian court; but when the prince heard of the death of his royal sire, he gave way to a burst of anguish so bitter, that his uncle[1] Charles of Anjou, king of Sicily, who was in company with him, astonished at his manner of receiving intelligence that hailed him king, asked him

[1] The husband of his mother's sister.

how it was that he bore the loss of both his sons with such quiet resignation, and abandoned himself to grief at the death of an aged man?[1] Edward made this memorable answer:

"The loss of infants may be repaired by the same God that gave them; but when a man has lost a good father, it is not in the course of nature for God to send him another."

From Sicily Queen Eleanora accompanied her royal husband to Rome, where they were welcomed and magnificently entertained by their friend Pope Gregory X.

England, happy in the permanent settlement of her ancient representative government, now for the first time practically established since the reign of St. Edward, enjoyed such profound tranquillity that her young king and queen were able to remain more than a year in their continental dominions. During this time the queen gave birth at the town of Maine to another heir,[2] more beautiful and promising than either of his deceased brethren. The queen named him after her beloved brother Alphonso; a name which sounds strangely to English ears, but had this prince lived to wear the crown of his great father, it would in all probability have become as national to England as the names of Edward or George.[3]

[1] Charles was not likely to be troubled with much sensibility, for while St. Louis was bitterly weeping for the death of their mutual brother, the Count of Poitou, slain in their crusade, Charles, who was on ship-board, amused himself with playing at tric-trac all day long. When the king of France was informed of this hard-hearted way of spending the hours of mourning, he came softly behind his brother in the heat of his game, and seizing his backgammon-board, threw men, dice, and money, into the sea. The humour with which the Lord de Joinville (who saw the incident) relates this anecdote, is irresistible.

[2] Paulus Emilius. He was born Nov. 23, 1272.

[3] Alphonso is an abbreviation of Ildefonso, a native Iberian saint.

A second time at this juncture the life of Edward was preserved in a manner he considered almost miraculous. As he was sitting with his queen on a couch, in their palace at Bordeaux, a flash of lightning killed two lords who were standing directly behind them, without injuring the royal pair.[1]

Edward, with his queen, made a progress homeward through all his French provinces, tilting at tournaments as he went. Passing through Paris, he did homage to the king of France for Aquitaine and its dependencies before he returned to assume the English crown.[2] The king and queen landed at Dover August 2, 1273. All preparations had been made for their speedy coronation, which took place on the 19th of the same month. They were received in London with the utmost exultation. The merchants, enriched by peaceful commerce with the rich wine provinces of the south, showered gold and silver on the royal retinue as they passed under the windows of the Chepe.[3] Both houses of parliament assembled to welcome and do honour to their constitutional king and his virtuous consort.

At the coronation of Edward and Eleanora preparations were made for the exercise of the most profuse hospitality; the whole areas of the Palace Yards, old and new, were filled with wooden buildings,[4] open at the top, to let out the smoke of cooking. Here for a

[1] Matthew Paris.

[2] Walsingham and Wikes.

[3] Edward brought in his train Guasco, a rebel Gascon baron, whom he had condemned to death, but his punishment seems to have been commuted by his being exhibited, at the London entry, with a rope about his neck. The poor captive expected nothing but death. He was forgiven the capital part of his offence, by the act of indemnity at the coronation. He returned thanks to Edward on his knees. This must have made a most striking feature of that part of the ceremony. Guasco was afterwards a loyal friend and subject to Edward.

[4] Ancient Chronicle quoted by Carte.

whole fortnight were prepared successions of banquets, served up for the entertainment of all comers, where the independent franklin, the stout yeoman from the country, and the rich citizen and industrious artisan from the metropolis, alike found a welcome, and were entertained gratuitously. Good order was general, and every one delighted with this auspicious commencement of the new reign. Edward and Eleanora were crowned by the hands of Robert Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury. One of the most extraordinary features of this coronation is recorded in an old black letter manuscript chronicle.[1]

"King Edward was crowned and anointed as right heir of England, with much honour and worship, with his virtuous queen; and after mass the king went to his palace to hold a royal feast among all the peers that had done him honour and worship. And when he was set at his meat King Alexander of Scotland came to do him service and to worship with a quentyse, and a hundred knights with him, horsed and arrayed. And when they were light off their horses, they let their horses go whither they would, and they that could take them had them to their own behoof. And after that came Sir Edmund, the king's brother, a courteous knight and a gentleman of renown, and the Earl of Gloucester. And after them came the Earl of Pembroke and the Earl of Warren, and each of them led a horse by their hand, and a hundred of their knights did the same. And when they were alight off their horses they let them go wherever they would, and they that could take them had them still at their liking."

The coronation of Edward and Eleanora had been

[1] Preserved by Sir Robert Cotton.

graced by the presence of the king of Scotland and the duke of Bretagne; but Llewellyn prince of Wales absented himself; upon which the king of England sent him a sharp message, to know wherefore he did not tender homage at the late coronation of himself and queen. Llewellyn refused to acknowledge that any homage was due; he was a victorious prince, for, taking advantage of the recent civil wars in England, he had reconquered all the territory which the Norman predecessors of Edward I. had wrested from the Welch.

The first mischance that befel the Welsh was the capture of the bride of Llewellyn[1] coming from France; her vessel was seized by the Bristol merchantmen, who carried her prisoner to King Edward. This prince had not yet learned to behave with cruelty to women. The young damsel, though the daughter of Simon de Montfort, his mortal foe, whom he had slain in battle, was at the same time the child of his aunt, Eleanor Plantagenet. He received her with the courtesy of a kinsman, and consigned her to the gentle keeping of his queen, with whom she resided at Windsor Castle.[2]

The war with Wales lasted till 1278, when Llewellyn, finding it impossible to recover his bride by force of arms, submitted to the required homage, and Queen Eleanora brought the Lady Elinor Montfort to Worcester, where King Edward bestowed his kinswoman upon Llewellyn, giving her away with his own royal hand, while his amiable queen supported her at the altar of Worcester cathedral, and graced the nuptial feast of Prince Llewellyn with her presence. The

[1] Walsingham and Powell's Welsh Chronicles.
[2] Mills' Catalogue of Honour. Wikes.

prince and princess of Wales afterwards accompanied the king and queen to Westminster,[1] with a great retinue of malcontent Snowdon barons and their vassals.

After this pacification, the death of the queen of Castile caused the provinces of Ponthieu and Aumerle to devolve on her daughter Queen Eleanora, who quitted England with King Edward in order to take possession of her inheritance, and do homage to the king of France. The return of the royal pair was hastened by another Welsh war; the fair bride of Llewellyn died after bringing him a living daughter,[2] and the prince of Wales, urged by the songs of the bards and the indignation of his subjects regarding his homage, suddenly invaded England. The ambiguous words of a prophecy of Merlin, asserting that

[1] The Prince of Wales did homage in Westminster Hall. According to an ancient MS., translated by Carte in his History, the Snowdon barons who accompanied Llewellyn to England with their serfs, were quartered at Islington, where they were anything but comfortable, taking great offence at the fare provided for them. They could neither drink the wine nor the ale of London; mead and Welsh ale could not be got for them; the English bread they refused to eat, and all London could not afford milk enough for their daily diet. They were indignant at the staring of the Londoners when they walked in the streets in their outlandish garb, and even suspected that the English took them for savages. "No," cried they in chorus, "we will never again visit Islington, excepting as conquerors." Droll as the association of ideas may be between the Welsh bards and Islington, the name of that harmless suburb was the constant refrain of the Welsh bards till Edward silenced them in death. As all the popular agitations were raised by the bards, who were perfectly frantic concerning the prophecies of Merlin at this crisis, their extirpation by Edward is a very probable circumstance, though contested by historians.

[2] This child, whose name was Guendolen, was brought to Edward a captive in her cradle: she was reared and professed a nun in the convent of Sempringham with her cousin Gladis, the only daughter of Prince David, brother to Llewellyn, which prince was executed by Edward. Thus ended the line of Roderick the Great.—*Piers Langtoft.* Piers mentions his personal acquaintance with these royal votaresses.

a prince born in Wales should be the acknowledged king of the whole British island, was the stimulus that led to a war terminating in the death of the brave Llewellyn.

The gold coronet of the unfortunate prince taken from his head by Lord Mortimer, after the fatal skirmish at Builth, was offered by Prince Alphonso at the shrine of Edward the Confessor.

The unsettled state of Wales needed the constant presence of King Edward to keep down the spirit of the people; and Queen Eleanora, who had followed him in all his Welsh campaigns, kept her court at Rhuddlan castle in the summer of 1283. Here her sixth daughter, the Princess Isabella, was born a native of Wales.[1]

Early in spring 1284, Edward carried his queen to his newly-built castle of Caernarvon, a stronghold he had just finished to awe the insurgents of the principality. This truly royal fortress, according to the accurate antiquarian Pennant, appears at present, in its external state, precisely as when Queen Eleanora first entered the stupendous gateway so many centuries ago. The walls are studded by defensive round towers; they have two principal gates, the east facing the Snowdon mountains, the west commanding the Menai. The entrance to the castle is very stately, beneath a noble tower, on the front of which appears the statue of the great Edward,[2] finely carved from the life, drawing a dagger with a stern air, as if menacing his unwilling subjects. This entrance had four portcullises, and every requisite of strength.

[1] Stow.

[2] His noble portrait, engraved by Vertue in Carte, is taken from this statue, which was probably the work of Cavallini.

To this mighty castle Edward brought Eleanora, at a time when her situation promised an increase to the royal family. The Eagle Tower, through whose gate the affectionate Eleanora entered, is at a prodigious height from the ground at the farthest end, and could only be approached by a drawbridge, supported on masses of opposing rock. Every one who beholds it is struck with its grand position; it is still, by the tradition of the district, called Queen Eleanor's gate; nor was the Eagle Tower an eyry by any means too lofty for the security of the royal Eleanora and her expected infant, since most of the Snowdon barons still held out, and the rest of the principality was fiercely chafing at the English curb. This consideration justifies the tradition which points out a little dark den, built in the thickness of the walls, as the chamber where the faithful queen gave birth to her son Edward. The chamber is twelve feet in length, and eight in breadth, and is without a fireplace. Its discomforts were somewhat modified by hangings of tapestry, of which some marks of tenters still appear in the walls.[1] Queen Eleanora was the first person who used tapestry as garniture for walls in England, and she never needed it more than in her dreary lying-in-chamber at Caernarvon.[2]

[1] It was the primitive office of the grooms of the chamber to hang up the tapestry, which was always carried in progress with the royal baggage, and sent forwards with the purveyor and grooms of the chamber, so that the queen found the stone walls of her sleeping chamber in comfortable order for her reception.

[2] Among the memorials of Queen Eleanora's sojourn at Caernarvon Castle, the cradle of her infant son is till shown. It is hung by rings and staples to two upright pieces of wood, like a cot; it is of rude workmanship, yet with much pretence to ornament, having many mouldings, though the nails are left rough; it is made of oak, and is in length three feet two inches, its width one foot eight inches at the head, and one foot five at the

The prince was born April 25th, when fires were not indispensable in a small close chamber. As a soldier's wife, used to attend her lord in all campaigns from Syria to Scotland, the queen had in all probability met with far worse accommodations than in the forlorn chamber in Eagle Tower. The queen certainly provided a Welsh nurse for her infant.[1] She thus proved her usual good sense by complying with the prejudices of the country.

Edward I. was at Rhuddlan Castle, negotiating with the despairing magnates of Wales, when news was brought him by Griffith Lloyd, a Welsh gentleman, that the queen had made him father of a living son of surpassing beauty. The king was transported with joy; he knighted the Welshman on the spot, and made him a magnificent donation of lands.[2]

The king hastened directly to Caernarvon to see his Eleanora and her boy; and three days after, the castle was the rendezvous of all the chiefs of North Wales, who met to tender their final submission to Edward I., and to implore him, as their lord paramount, to appoint them a prince who was a native of their own country, and whose native tongue was neither French nor Saxon, which they assured him they could not understand.[2]

Edward told them he would immediately appoint them a prince, who could speak neither English nor French. The Welsh magnates, expecting he was a kinsman of their royal line, declared they would in-

feet; it has rockers, and is crowned by two birds; whether doves or eagles antiquaries have not yet decided.—*Boswell's Antiquities.*

[1] There is an entry in the household-book of Edward II. of twenty shillings, which the king presented to Mary of Caernarvon, his nurse, for coming all the way from Wales to see him.
Pennant's Wales.

[2] Speed.

stantly accept him as their prince, if his character was void of reproach; whereupon the king ordered his infant son to be brought in and presented to them, assuring the assembly that he was just born a native of their country, that he could not speak a word of English or French, and, if they pleased, the first words he uttered should be Welsh. The fierce mountaineers little expected such a ruler; they had, however, no alternative but submission, and, with as good a grace as they might, kissed the tiny hand which was to sway their sceptre, and vowed fealty to the babe of the faithful Eleanora.[1]

The queen soon changed her residence to her magnificent palace of Conway Castle, where all the elegancies of an age further advanced in luxury than is generally supposed, were assembled round her. Many traces of her abode at Conway exist; among others, her state-bed chamber retains some richness of ornament; it opens on a terrace commanding a beautiful view. Leading from the chamber is an arched recess, called by tradition Queen Eleanora's oriel; it is raised by steps from the floor, and beautifully adorned with painted glass windows. Here the queen of England, during her *levée* or rising, sat to receive the ladies qualified to be presented to her, while her tirewoman combed and braided those long tresses[2] which are the glory of a Spanish donna, and which her statues show Eleanora of Castile possessed. A poem contempo-

[1] Stow minutely details this incident, the authenticity of which is not only supported by the local traditions of North Wales, but by the giant authority of Selden.

[2] This custom, derived from the middle ages, was continued in France till the revolution. The word levée, still used at our court, is derived from it.

rary with this queen minutely describes these state toilet places.[1]

"In her oriel there she was,
Closed well with royal glass;
Filled it was with imagery,
Every window by and by."

The August following the birth of Prince Edward saw the death of Prince Alphonso, the heir of England, an event which deeply afflicted his mother. The same year brought calamity to her brother, King Alphonso X. of Castile.[2] This great prince was the most extraordinary person of his time, but wrapping himself up in his mathematical studies in the latter part of his reign, his son, Sancho the Brave, deposed him. This event was a source of great grief to Eleanora, for her royal brother was tenderly beloved by her; she had named her favourite child after him, and now, in his reverse of fortune, she urged her royal lord to interfere with her nephew Sancho[3] for the restoration of her brother. The interposition was in vain, for the learned Alphonso died in confinement.

The death of King Alexander of Scotland, in 1285, opened a new prospect for still further aggrandising the progeny of Queen Eleanora. The heiress of Scot-

[1] Pennant.

[2] This king, surnamed *Il Sabio*, employed the most learned men, not only Europeans, but Arabs and Jews, to assist him in constructing the celebrated Alphonsine Tables, so long the standard of astronomical calculations, showing, withal, some glimpses of the light afterwards cast on science by Galileo and Sir Isaac Newton. Alphonso paid his learned assistants forty thousand crowns for their services, a benefaction infinitely resented by his combative subjects, who took their monarch and his astronomers for conjurors, and were infuriated that a king should bestow treasure on any peaceful profession.—See *Atlas Géographique*. Alphonso pursued his studies in quiet when imprisoned, consoling himself by considering that his subjects were fools.

[3] Many papers on this subject appear in the Fœdera.

land, the Princess Margaret of Norway; great niece to Edward I., was, by the consent of the nobles of Scotland, solemnly betrothed to Prince Edward of Caernarvon, and every prospect appeared that the island crowns would be happily united, in the persons of the infant son of Eleanora and the little queen of Scotland. After this pacification of the whole island, the king and queen resided three years in Aquitaine. Eleanora then gave birth to her seventh and eighth daughters, the princesses Beatrice and Berengaria.

When the queen returned to England she was urged to devote her fourth daughter the princess Mary to the cloister. Her reluctance to relinquish this child is noted by most chroniclers, and produced more than one pathetic epistle from dignitaries of the church, on the impropriety of withholding from heaven a chosen lamb from her numerous flock.[1] Among the other admirable qualities of Eleanora we find freedom from the prejudices of her era. She kept a happy medium between the bold infidelity of her philosophic brother Alphonso the mathematician,[2] and the superfluous devotion of the middle ages. The princess Mary was, however, veiled at the age of ten years at Ambresbury, 1289. The year after her profession the queen added a ninth daughter, the princess Blanche, to her family.

Eleanora reared and educated her numerous train of

[1] There are innumerable grants recorded in the Fœdera to the nun-princess. Her father grants the forest of Savernake and other woodlands, for fire for her chamber; the port of Southampton is taxed for tuns of wine and oil for her lamp.

[2] Alphonso is said to have declared, "that he could have devised a better way of ordering the movements of the celestial bodies;" which speech led to his deposition. The fact is, he was not satisfied with his own astronomical tables, and foresaw subsequent improvements.

beautiful princesses in a retired angle of Westminster Palace, which was given on account of their residence there the appellation of the Maiden Hall.[1]

Three of the queen's elder daughters were married or betrothed in 1290. The princess royal, Eleanora, was betrothed to Alphonso, prince of Arragon: this prince died soon after, when she married the duke of Barr. The next sister, Joanna of Acre, in her eighteenth year, renowned for her beauty and high spirit, was married with great pomp at the monastery of the Knights of St. John, Clerkenwell, to the premier peer of England, Gilbert the Red, Earl of Gloucester. A few weeks later, Queen Eleanora assisted at a still statelier ceremony, when her third daughter, Margaret, then fifteen, wedded, at Westminster Abbey, John, the second duke of Brabant.

Our historians dwell much on the magnificence displayed at the nuptials of these princesses. A list of the plate used in the queen's household will prove that the court of Eleanora had attained a considerable degree of luxury. The plate was the work of Ade, the king's goldsmith, and the description of the rich vessels furnished by this member of the goldsmith's company has been brought to light by modern research.[3] Thirty-four pitchers of gold and silver, calculated to hold water or wines; ten gold chalices of the value of one hundred and forty to two hundred and ninety-two

[1] Brayley's and Brittons' Palace of Westminster, 114. This portion of the old palace was destroyed by fire a little time after the queen's death.

[2] The young duchess did not immediately quit England, but had a separate establishment, as appears by the following entry in Edward II.'s household books: "Paid Robert de Ludham thirteen shillings and sixpence, who was porter to the king's daughter, the Lady Margaret, duchess of Brabant, when she maintained a household different from the king's son."

[3] By Mr. Herbert, city librarian, in his history of City Companies.

pounds each; ten cups of silver gilt, or silver white, some with stands of the same, or enamelled; more than one hundred smaller silver cups, value from four to one hundred and eighteen pounds each; also cups of jasper, plates and dishes of silver, gold salts, alms bowls, silver hanapers or baskets; cups of benison, with holy sentences wrought thereon; enamelled silver jugs with effigies of the king in a surcoat and hood, and two effigies of Queen Eleanora.

It is generally supposed that Tom Coryate, of queer memory, introduced the use of forks from Italy so lately as the time of James I. But our Provençal Plantagenet queens did not feed with their fingers, whatever their English subjects might do; since in the list of Eleanora's plate occurs a pair of knives with silver sheaths enamelled, with a *fork* of crystal, and a silver fork[1] handled with ebony and ivory. In the list of royal valuables were likewise combs and looking-glasses of silver-gilt, and a bodkin of silver in a leather case; five serpents' tongues set in a standard of silver; a royal crown set with rubies, emeralds, and great pearls; another with Indian pearls; and one great crown of gold ornamented with emeralds, sapphires of the East, rubies, and large oriental pearls. This seems to have been Eleanora's state crown, used at the coronation feast. Above all, there is a gold ring with a great sapphire, wrought and set by no other hand but that of St. Dunstan.

The Countess of Gloucester brought forth a beautiful boy in the spring of 1291, to the infinite joy and pleasure of her mother. Both the king and queen

[1] See likewise Record Commission, p. 78, where forks are enumerated among the items of Edward I.'s domestic utensils.

Eleanora welcomed this first grand-child with delight, and called his name Gilbert.

The autumn of the year 1290 brought threatening clouds to the prosperity of the island kingdoms, and the royal family of Queen Eleanor. The little queen, Margaret of Scotland, was to be sent this year from Norway to Scotland, and thence by agreement to the court of England, that she might be educated under the care of the admirable queen of Edward I. The bishop of St. Andrews wrote to King Edward, that a report was spread of the young queen's death[1] on her homeward voyage. Edward, who had already sent the bishop of Durham[2] and six regents to take possession of Scotland[3] in the names of Edward of Caernarvon and Margaret of Norway, was startled into prompt action at these alarming tidings. He took a hasty farewell of his beloved queen, and charged her to follow him with all convenient speed.

Edward had not reached the Scottish borders, when the fatal news reached him that Eleanora, the faithful companion of his life, in travelling through Lincolnshire to join him previously to his entering Scotland, had been seized with a dangerous autumnal fever at Herdeby, near Grantham.

Ambition, at the strong call of conjugal love, for once

[1] From the Latin of Wikes.

[2] She died at the Orkneys, it is supposed of the fatigue of a very stormy voyage, being driven to those islands by violent weather, October 1290.—See Walsingham.

Her death was the greatest national calamity that ever befel Scotland. An elegant female poet, Miss Holford, says,

"The north wind sobs where Margaret sleeps,
And still in tears of blood her memory Scotland steeps."

[3] Act. Pub., and Buchanan.

released its grasp on the mighty heart of Edward. In comparison with Eleanora, dead or dying, the coveted crown of Scotland was nothing in his estimation. He turned southward instantly; but, though he travelled with the utmost speed, he arrived too late to see her living once more. His admirable queen had expired, November 29th, at the house of a gentleman named Weston. She died, according to our calculation, in the forty-seventh year of her age.

The whole affairs of Scotland, however pressing they might be, were obliterated for a time from the mind of the great Edward, by the acute sorrow he suffered for the death of Eleanora;[1] nor, till he had paid the duties he considered due to her breathless clay, would he attend to the slightest temporal business. In the bitterest grief he followed her corpse in person during thirteen days, in the progress of the royal funeral from Grantham to Westminster. At the end of every stage the royal bier rested, surrounded by its attendants, in some central part of a great town, till the neighbouring ecclesiastics came to meet it in solemn procession, and placed it before the high altar of the principal church. At every one of these resting-places the royal mourner vowed to erect a cross in memory of the *chère reine*, as he passionately called his lost Eleanora. Thirteen of these splendid monuments of his affections once existed: those of Northampton and Waltham[2] still remain models of architectural beauty. The principal citizens of London, with their magistrates, came several miles on the

1 Walsingham and Speed.

2 Waltham Cross was built where Eleanoras' corpse turned from the high north road to rest for the night at Waltham Abbey, which is situated about a mile from the spot.

north road, clad in black hoods and mourning cloaks, to meet the royal corpse and join the solemn procession. The hearse rested, previously to its admission into Westminster Abbey, at the spot now occupied by the statue of Charles I., which commanded a grand view of the abbey, the hall, and palace of Westminster.

They buried Queen Eleanora at the feet of her father-in-law. Her elegant statue, reclining on an altar-shaped tomb, was cast in bronze by the celebrated artist patronised by Henry III. and Edward I., Pietro Cavallini, — who built his furnace to cast the queen's statue in St. Margaret's churchyard. He produced a work of which any modern artist might be justly proud. We feel, while gazing upon it, that it possesses all the reality of individual resemblance. The countenance of Eleanora is serenely smiling; the delicate features are perfect both in form and expression. The right hand held a sceptre now broken away; the left is closed over something pendent from the neck by a string supposed to be a crucifix. Her head is crowned with a magnificent circlet, from which her hair falls in elegant waves on her shoulders. The queen of Edward I. must have been a model of feminine beauty. No wonder that the united influence of loveliness, virtue, and sweet temper, should have inspired in the heart of her renowned lord an attachment so deep and true.

The king endowed the abbey of Westminster with many rich gifts, for dirges and masses, to commemorate his beloved queen. Wax-lights perpetually burnt around her tomb, till the Reformation extinguished them three hundred years afterwards, and took away the funds that kept them alight. "She hath," says Fabian, "two wax tapers burning upon her tomb both day

and night, which hath so continued syn the day of her burying to this present."[1]

The tomb itself is of grey Petworth marble, and is designed in a style corresponding with the rich memorial cross of Waltham, especially the lower range of shields, on which are seen embossed the towers of Castile and the purple lions of Leon, with the bendlets of Ponthieu. Round the metal table on which the statue reposes is a verge, embossed with Saxon characters, to this effect:—"Here lies Alianor, wife to King Edward, formerly queen of England, on whose soul God for pity have grace. Amen." This is at present the sole epitaph of Eleanora of Castile; but, before the Reformation, a tablet hung near the tomb on which were some funeral verses in Latin, with an English translation by some ancient rhymester,[2] transcribed here, not for their beauty, but their historical character.

"Queen Eleanora is here interred,
A royal virtuous dame,
Sister unto the Spanish king,
Of ancient blood and fame;

[1] The tomb of Henry III. is richly inlaid with curious and precious stones, which his son Edward I. brought with him from Syria for that purpose. Its splendour may be noticed by those who walk in the abbey beneath St. Edward's chapel. Fortunately most of this beautiful mosaic of curious stones is perfect on the outside of the chapel, which is placed at an inconvenient height for the operations of the pickers and stealers who daily visit that stately fane; therefore this memento of our great king's filial piety still remains in a tolerable state of preservation. "Edward I. reserved some of his precious store to adorn the statue of his beloved wife, for round the neck are cusps where a carcanet has been fixed, but it has been wrenched off and stolen."—*Pennant.*

[2] A tradition is extant, that Skelton (whom we are loath to call a poet, though Poet Laureat to Henry VIII.) translated the Latin epitaphs into English, while he was a sanctuary-man, under the protection of Abbot Islip, who had them hung on tablets near the tombs.—Brayley's Historical Perambulator.

King Edward's wife, first of that name,
And Prince of Wales by right,
Whose father Henry just the third
Was sure an English wight.
He craved her wife unto his son.
The prince himself did goe
On that embassage luckily,
Himself with many moe,
This knot of linked marriage
The king Alphonso liked,
And with his sister and this prince
The marriage up was striked.
The dowry rich and royal was
For such a prince most meet;
For Ponthieu was the marriage gift,
A dowry rich and great,
A woman both in counsel wise,
Religious, fruitful, meek,
Who did increase her husband's friends,
And 'larged his honour eke.
Learn to die.

Of all the crosses raised to the memory of Eleanora of Castile by her sorrowing widower, that of Charing is the most frequently named by the inhabitants of the metropolis, although the structure itself has vanished from the face of the earth. Yet every time Charing Cross is mentioned, a tribute is paid unconsciously to the virtues of Edward I.'s beloved queen, for the appellation is derived from the king's own lips, who always spoke of her in his French dialect as the *chère reine*. Thus the words Charing Cross signify the "dear queen's cross,"[1] an object that was always seen by the royal widower in his egress and regress from his palace of Westminster. This anecdote is corroborated by Edward's personal habits, who certainly, like his ancestors, spoke French in his familiar intercourse.[2] Our sove-

[1] Malcolm's London Restituta.

[2] Holinshed.

reigns had not yet adopted English as their mother tongue. Although Edward and his father spoke English readily, yet their conversation in domestic life was chiefly carried on in French.

Foreigner as she was, Eleanora of Castile entirely won the love and good-will of her subjects. Walsingham, thus sums up her character:[1] "To our nation she was a loving mother, the column and pillar of the whole realm; therefore, to her glory, the king her husband caused all those famous trophies to be erected, wherever her noble corse did rest; for he loved her above all earthly creatures. She was a godly, modest, and merciful princess: the English nation in her time was not harassed by foreigners, nor the country people by the purveyors of the crown. The sorrow-stricken she consoled as became her dignity, and she made them friends that were at discord."

Civilization made rapid advances under the auspices of a court so well regulated as that of Eleanora of Castile. Wales, in particular, emerged from its state of barbarism in some degree. The manners of the Welsh were so savage at the time when Eleanora kept her court in North Wales, that her royal lord was forced to revive an ancient Welsh law, threatening severe punishments on any one "who should strike the queen, or snatch anything out of her hand." The English had

[1] The common people have not dealt so justly by her; the name of this virtuous woman and excellent queen is only known by them to be slandered by means of a popular ballad, called "A Warning against Pride, being the Fall of Queen Eleanora, Wife to Edward I. of England, who for her pride sank into the earth at Queenhithe, and rose again at Charing Cross after killing the Lady Mayoress." Some faint traces of the quarrels between the city of London and Eleanor of Provence regarding Queenhithe, had been heard by the writer of this ballad, who confounded her with her daughter-in-law, whose name was connected with Charing Cross.

little reason to pride themselves on their superiority. Although there was no danger of their beating the queen in her hall of state, they had pelted her predecessor from London Bridge. Moreover, in the commencement of the reign of Edward I., London was so ill-governed, that murders were committed in the street in noon-day.[1]

Sculpture, architecture, and casting in brass and bronze, were not only encouraged by King Edward and his queen, but brought to great perfection by Cavallini, and other foreign artists whom they induced to visit this country. Carving in wood, an art purely English, now richly decorated both ecclesiastical and domestic structures.

Eleanora of Castile first introduced the use of tapestry as hangings for walls. It was a fashion appertaining to Moorish luxury, adopted by the Spaniards. The coldness of our climate must have made it indispensable to the fair daughter of the South, chilled with the damp stone-walls of English Gothic halls and chambers. In the preceding centuries, tapestry was solely worked to decorate altars, or to be displayed as pictorial exhibitions, in solemn commemoration of great events, like the Bayeux tapestry of Matilda of Flanders.

The robes worn by the court of Eleanora of Castile were graceful; they had the close under-gown or kirtle

1 The vigorous government of Edward soon crushed these evils. He made it penal by proclamation for any person but the great lords to be seen in London streets with either spear or buckler after the parson of St. Martin's-le-Grand had rung out his curfew bell, a proof that the curfew was rung as late as the time of Edward I. It had become an instrument of civil police, rather than military despotism. The highways, on which we have seen Henry III. and his queen robbed in open day, were now cleared of all wood excepting high trees. The first clock in England was set up in a clock-tower, opposite to Westminster Palace.—Stow.

made high in the neck, with tight sleeves, and a train, over which a graceful robe with full fur sleeves was worn. The ugly gorget, an imitation of the helmets of the knights, executed in white cambric or lawn, out of which was cut a visor for the face to peep through, deformed the head-tire of some of the ladies of her court, and is to be seen on the effigy (otherwise most elegant) of Aveline Countess of Lancaster, her sister-in-law. But Eleanora had a better taste in dress; no gorget hides her beautiful throat and fine shoulders, but her ringlets flow on each side of her face, and fall on her neck from under the regal diadem. The ladies of Spain are celebrated for the beauty of their hair, and we see by her statues that Eleanora did not conceal her tresses. The elegance and simplicity of the dress adopted by this lovely queen might form a model for female costume in any era.[1]

There is little more than tradition to support the assertion that to Eleanora of Castile, England owes the introduction of the famous breed of sheep for which Cotswold has been so famous. A few of these creatures were introduced, by the care of this patriotic queen, from her native Spain, and they had increased to that degree in about half a century, that their wool became the staple riches of England.

The last time the name of Eleanora of Castile appears in our national records is in the Parliamentary Rolls, and from Norman French we translate the following supplication:—"The executors of Oliver de Ingram pray to recover before the king's auditors three hundred and fifty marks, owed by Dame Alianora, late queen and companion to our Lord King Edward I.,

[1] Pennant.

and the said executors show that though our lord the king had given command to have it paid, it is not yet done; therefore they humbly crave that he will be pleased to give a new order for that same, on account of the health of the soul of the said Queen Alianore, his companion."

By this document we learn from the best authority, that creditors, in the times when catholicism was prevalent, considered they kept a detaining hold on the souls even of royal debtors.[1]

Moreover, in the same parliament, the poor prioress and her nuns of St. Helen present a pathetic petition to the king, representing "how earnestly they have prayed for the soul of madame the queen, late companion to King Edward, and they hope for perpetual alms for the sustenance of their poor convent in London, in consideration of the pains they have taken."[2]

Eleanora of Castile left seven living daughters and one son. Only four of her daughters were married.

Isabella,[3] the sixth daughter of King Edward and Eleanora of Castile, was married at Ipswich, the year

[1] Without needing such stimulus, and solely prompted by family honour and a feeling of integrity, we have seen our young queen pay the debts of a father whom she never knew—a line of conduct in early youth which is, we trust, duly appreciated by her country. Long after this sublunary scene has closed upon her glories of regality, the biographers of succeeding centuries will remember with praise this action of the then maiden sovereign of Great Britain.

[2] Folio 1, Par. Rolls, 475.

[3] The entries in the household book of Edward I., 1298, preserve some of the particulars of this marriage. To Maud *Makejoy*, for dancing before Edward Prince of Wales in the King's Hall at Ipswich, two shillings. To Sir Peter Champrent, in lieu of the bridal bed of the countess of Holland, the king's daughter, which he ought to have had as his fee when she married the Earl of Holland at Ipswich, twenty marks.

To Reginald Page—to John the *Vidulator*, and Fitz-Simon, minstrels, for making minstrelsy the day of the marriage of the king's daughter, the Countess of Holland, fifty shillings each.

before her father's wedlock with Marguerite of France, to the Count of Holland. It is doubtful if the young countess ever left England, for two years afterwards her lord died, and she was left a widow, childless. She afterwards married the earl of Hereford, Humphrey de Bohun. Another entry mentions the birth of her first child.

October 30, 1303. To Robert le Norreys, servant to the Lady Isabella Countess of Hereford, the king's daughter, for bringing news to the Prince (of Wales) of the birth of her first son, twenty-six pounds thirteen and fourpence.

The princess royal married, after the death of her mother, the Duke of Barr. The king paid Husso de Thornville, valet of the Count of Barr, for bringing him news of the birth of her eldest son, the enormous sum of fifty pounds! But this boy was the next heir to England after Edward of Caernarvon, as Edward I. settled the succession on the daughters of Eleanora of Castile; first on the Countess of Barr and her progeny, then on Joanna of Acre, and all the seven princesses then alive, in succession.

Edward I. survived most of his beloved Eleanora's children. Joanna of Acre died soon after her father. The Countess of Barr preceded him to the tomb soon after the birth of her second son in 1298, and the Countess of Hereford survived him but four years.

The nun princess and the unfortunate Edward II., were the only individuals that reached the term of middle life, out of the numerous family that Edward I. had by Eleanora of Castile.

MARGUERITE OF FRANCE,

SECOND QUEEN OF EDWARD I.

The family of Marguerite—Disconsolate widowhood of Edward I.—Demands Marguerite's sister—Blanche la Belle—Edward contracted to Marguerite—Espousals—Maids of honour—Edward leaves his bride for the Scotch war—Queen follows Edward—Lives at Brotherton—Eldest son born there—Left at Cawood—Queen goes to Scotland—Danger of journey owing to Wallace—Her court at Dunfermline—High festival at Westminster Palace—Marguerite's gold circlet—Birth of the Queen's second son—Queen's kindness—Robert Bruce's crown—Queen saves a goldsmith's life—Benevolence to the mayor of Winchester—Residence at Winchester—Death of King Edward—Happy wedlock of Marguerite—Her good qualities—Her historiographer John o' London—His sketch of Edward's character—Anecdotes of Edward—Marguerite's visit to France—Friendship with her son-in-law—Widowhood—Early death—Burial—Charities—Foundations—Debts—Children—Present descendants.

THE early death of the brave son and successor of St. Louis, King Philip le Hardi, left his youngest daughter, the princess Marguerite, fatherless at a very tender age. She was brought up under the guardianship of her brother Philip le Bel, and carefully educated by her mother Queen Marie, a learned and virtuous princess, to whom Joinville dedicated his immortal memoirs.[1] Marguerite early showed indications of the same piety and innate goodness of heart which, notwithstanding some superfluity of devotion, really distinguished the character of her grandfather.

[1] Of the Life of St. Louis.

If Marguerite of France possessed any comeliness of person, her claims to beauty were wholly overlooked by contemporaries, who surveyed with admiration the exquisite persons of her elder brother and sister, and surnamed them, by common consent, Philip le Bel and Blanche la Belle. The eldest princess of France was full six years older than Marguerite,[1] and was withal the reigning beauty of Europe, when Edward I. was rendered the most disconsolate of widowers by the death of Eleanora of Castile. If an historian may be believed, who is so completely a contemporary that he ceased to write before the second Edward ceased to reign, Marguerite was substituted, in a marriage-treaty commenced by Edward for the beautiful Blanche, by a diplomatic manœuvre unequalled for craft since the days of Leah and Rachel.

It has been seen that grief in the energetic mind of Edward I. assumed the character of intense activity; but after all was done that human ingenuity could contrive, or that the gorgeous ceremonials of the Roman church could devise, of funeral honours to the memory of the *chère reine*, his beloved Eleanora, the warlike king of England sank into a morbid state of melancholy. His contemporary chronicler emphatically says,

> His solace all was reft sith she was from him gone.
> On fell things he thought, and waxed heavy as lead,
> For sadness him o'ermastered since Eleanor was dead.[2]

A more forlorn widowerhood no pen can portray, than is thus described by the monk Piers.

[1] See Piers of Langtoft corroborated by Speed's calculation of the age of Marguerite. As the most extraordinary blunders have been made by an author who has endeavoured to write this memoir, the point deserves attention.

[2] Piers of Langtoft.

It is exceedingly curious to observe how anxious Edward was to ascertain the qualifications of the princess Blanche. His ambassadors were commanded to give a minute description not only of her face and manners, but of the turn of her waist, the form of her foot and of her hand, likewise *sa façoun*, perhaps dress and demeanour.

The result of this inquisition was that Blanche was perfectly lovely, for *ne plus bel creature nul trouve*. Moreover, Sire Edward, at his mature age, became violently in love (from report) of the charms of Blanche la Belle. The royal pair began to correspond, and the damsel admonished him by letter that he must in all things submit to her brother, King Philip. In truth, the extreme wish of King Edward to be again united in wedlock with a fair and loving queen induced him to comply with conditions too hard even for a young bride to exact, who had a hand, a waist, and a foot perfect as those possessed by Blanche la Belle. Philip demanded that Gascony should be given up by Edward for ever, as a settlement on any posterity Edward might have by his beautiful sister. To this our king agreed; but when he surrendered the province, according to the feudal tenure,[1] to his suzerain,

[1] This ceremony, as narrated by Piers, is exceedingly like the surrender of a modern copyhold.

Edward without reserve
Sal give Philip the king
The whole of Gascony,
Without disturbing
After the *forty days*
Holding that feofment
Philip without delays
Sal give back the tenement
To Edward and to Blanche,
And the heirs that of them come.

the treacherous Philip refused to give it up, or let him marry his beautiful sister; and just at this time the name of Marguerite, the youngest sister of Blanche, a child of little more than eleven years of age, is found in the marriage treaty between England and France.

The consternation of the king's brother Edmund of Lancaster, when he found the villanous part Philip le Bel meant to play in the detention of the duchy of Guienne, is very apparent. His letter to his brother assumes so much the style of familiar correspondence, that it is to be regretted that the limits of this work will not permit the entire insertion of the document.

"After," says Earl Edmund, "my lord and brother had surrendered, for the peace of Christendom, this territory of Gascony to the will of France, king Philip assured me, by word of mouth, that he would agree to the aforesaid terms; and he came into my chamber, where the queen my wife[1] was, with Monsieur Hugh de Vere, and Master John de Lacy, and he brought with him the Duke of Burgundy, and there he promised, according to the faith of loyal kings, that in reality all things should be as we supposed. And on this faith we sent Master John de Lacy to Gascony in order to render up to the people of the king of France the *seisin* of the land, as afore agreed. And the king sent the constable of France to receive it. And when these things were done, we came to the two queens,[2] and they prayed the king of France that he would forthwith give

To that ilk *scrite*
Edward set his seal
That the gift was perfect,
And with witnesses leal.

[1] The dowager of Navarre, Queen Blanche, mother to Jane wife of the king of France, was married to Edmund of Lancaster.

[2] The queen of France and her mother, queen Blanche, wife of Lancaster.

safe conduct to my lord the king to come and receive again his land and fortresses according to his covenant. And the king of France in secret, in the presence of Queen Jane, told me he was grieved that he must return a hard answer before the council, but nevertheless he meant to fulfil all he had undertaken. And forthwith he declared before his said council that he never meant to restore the territory of which he had just been given full seisin."

Earl Edmund evidently concludes his letter in a great fright, lest Philip le Bel should persist in his cheating line of conduct; but he makes a serious exhortation to his brother, not to let *small* causes break the compact. His letter is accompanied by treaty of marriage, in which is inserted, not the name of the beautiful princess Blanche, but that of the child Marguerite. A fierce war immediately ensued, lasting from 1294 to 1298, during which time Edward, who at sixty had no time to lose, was left half married to Blanche; for according to Piers of Langtoft, who seems intimately acquainted with this curious piece of secret history, the pope's dispensation had already been completed.[1]

It was not till the year 1298 that any pacific arrangement took place between Edward and the brother of Blanche. The treaty was then renewed for Marguerite, who had grown up in the mean time. The whole arrangement was referred to the arbitration of the pope, who decreed that Guienne was to be restored to the right owner; that Edward I. should marry Marguerite, and that she should be paid the portion of fifteen thousand pounds left her by King Philip le

[1] The facts stated by Piers are most satisfactorily confirmed by Wikes. Likewise by the learned researches of Sir Harris Nicolas; see a Latin poem preserved in the city archives, Chronicle of London, p. 132.

Hardi, her father. This sum, Piers verily believes, Philip le Bel meant to appropriate to his own use.

Piers does not say why the younger sister was substituted instead of Blanche,[1] but he seems to insinuate in these lines that she was the better character :—

> Not Dame Blanche the Sweet,
> Of whom I now spake,
> But Dame Marguerite
> *Good withouten lack.*

Marguerite was married to Edward, who met her at Canterbury, by Robert de Winchelsea, September 8th, 1299, when she was in her seventeenth year.

Among the folk of good array, sent by Philip for the accommodation of the May his sister,[2] we find by the wardrobe-book of Edward I. that there were three ladies of the bed-chamber, and four noble demoiselles, or maids of honour. Among these attendants are two French, as Agnes de la Croise, to whom was paid 10 marks, and Matilde de Val, 100 shillings. Two ladies were sent from England to wait on the young queen; these were the Lady Vaux and the Lady Joanna Fountayne, each received 10*l*. Our chroniclers speak much of the goodness of Marguerite of France, and she

[1] It was because the beautiful Blanche had the prospect of being empress. Blanche, daughter of Philip le Hardi, and sister to Philip le Bel, married Rodolphus duke of Austria, eldest son to the Emperor Albert I. Her husband was afterwards king of Bohemia. This marriage was arranged between King Philip and Albert. The young lady, who had accompanied her brother, was betrothed at Toul in Lorraine in the spring of 1299.—*Du Fresne's Notes to Memoirs of the Prince de Joinville.*

[2] Philip for that May
Made providence ready;
With folk of good array
To Dover came she.

In the king's household book there is a present of two hundred marks to the valet of the king's chamber, Edmund de Cornwall, on occasion of the king's marriage with Marguerite of France.

seems to have deserved the respect and affection of her royal lord. At the time of her marriage with the king of England, her niece, the young daughter of King Philip, was solemnly betrothed to her son-in-law Edward.

"Now," says a Latin poem[1] descriptive of the Scottish war," the king returns that he may marry queen Marguerite the flower of France. When love buds between great princes it drives away bitter sobs from their subjects." The stormy aspect of the times did not afford the royal bridegroom leisure to attend to the coronation of Marguerite. King Edward had very little time to devote to his bride; for, to his great indignation, all his barons, taking the opportunity of his absence, thought proper to disband themselves, and disperse their feudatory militia, leaving their warlike king but the shadow of an army to pursue the advantages he had gained by the sanguinary battle of Falkirk.[2] In less than a week the royal bridegroom departed with fiery speed to crush, if possible, the

[1] Song of the Scottish wars. Political Songs of England, Camden Society 178.

[2] It was at this juncture that Robert Bruce first manifested some sensibility for the woes of the country whose royal blood he shared. After he finally left the hands of her oppressor, he was not able to provide for the retreat of his wife, who was left at the court of the young queen. The Lady de Bruce was not ill treated, though she was put under restraint at one of the royal manors; she was allowed three pounds per month for maintenance, and was provided with servants, among whom is specified "one fote-boy, decent and not riotous, to make her bed." Her whole retinue consisted of three men, three maids, and three greyhounds. She was allowed withal fish and game, and the fairest house on the manor. All this clemency is accounted for by the fact that Robert Bruce's father had been, in the crusades, the companion in arms and dear friend of King Edward. In a bond still extant for forty pounds lent by Edward to the elder Bruce, the king styles him his beloved bachelor. When Edward advanced in years he grew fiercer, and, forgetting the affections of his youthful days, hanged the younger sons of his old friend, Alexander and Thomas de Bruce.—*See Fœdera.*

gallant efforts the Scotch were making for their freedom. He left London the Wednesday after his marriage.

The queen, while her husband was thus engaged, remained in London, and resided chiefly at the Tower. The suite of apartments where the queens of England had previously kept their state at Westminster having been lately destroyed by fire, the royal palace of the Tower was, in fact, the only metropolitan residence at which Marguerite could sojourn.[1] During the summer succeeding the queen's bridal, her court at the Tower was placed almost under quarantine, owing to the breaking out of a pestilence remarkable for its infectious nature. From the writings of Gaddesden, court physician at this time, we come to the conclusion that this was the small-pox, imported by Edward I.'s crusade, from Syria.

After this summer Queen Marguerite spent the principal part of her time, like her predecessor, Eleanora of Castile, following the camp of King Edward: and when the ferocious contest he was carrying on in Scotland made her residence in that kingdom too dangerous, she kept court in one of the northern counties.

April 1300 Edward set out with his queen and his eldest son, and taking his route through Lincolnshire, crossed the Humber into Yorkshire and left the queen at Brotherton, a village on the banks of the Wherfe in Yorkshire. Here that prince was born, from whom

[1] Before Marguerite took up her abode at the Tower, King Edward took the precaution of issuing his royal mandate to the civic authorities, in which, after informing them that his beloved companion the queen would shortly sojourn in the Tower of London, he enjoins that no petitioner from the city should presume to approach that spot, lest the person of the queen be endangered by the contagion being brought from the infected air of the city. This order is dated from Carlisle, June 28th.

the noble family of Howard is directly descended, and in whose right the head of that house bears the honour of Earl Marshal of England. Marguerite gave birth to Prince Thomas on the 1st of June. The queen had made rich offerings to the shrine of Canterbury previously to the birth of her infant; and she named him Thomas after the favourite English saint.[1]

"The king bid her not stay,
But come to the north countrie,
Unto Brotherton on Wherfe,
There was she
Mother of a son that child hight Thomas.

"When the king heard say
She had so well *farn*, (fared,)
Thither he went away
To see her and her bairn.

"The queen, with her son,
At Cawood leaves he,
And oft he came on Ouse
Her to y-see."[2]

The young queen was stationed at Cawood Castle, a magnificent pile of feudal grandeur, being a country seat of the archbishop's, seven miles from York. King Edward often came there down the Ouse to see her and her infant. Here Marguerite chiefly abode[3] till the year 1304. Her husband then considered Scotland subdued from sea to sea, and as completely prostrate as the principality of Wales; upon which he sent for his young queen to behold his triumph, and to keep Christmas at Dunfermline.

Piers of Langtoft declares there was much danger in

[1] Year Book of Edward I.

[2] Piers of Langtoft.

[3] For seven years, at this juncture, the courts of King's Bench and the Exchequer were held at York, to be near the royal court.—Walsingham.

her journey; for though Scotland was apparently subdued, the woods and highways swarmed with armed men who would not come in and submit to the conqueror. Thus irreverently does that time-serving historian sing of a hero whose memory has been embalmed by the justice of more modern ages. Speaking of the danger of the royal Marguerite's journey to Dunfermline, he says:—

"By that the war was ent, (ended)
Winter was three year,
To Dunfermeline he went,
For rest will he there.
For the queen he sent,
And she did dight her cheer;
From Cawood she went
To Dunfermeline to fare.

"But the lord of Badenoch,
Fraser, and Wallace,
Lived at thieves' law,
And robbed all the ways.
They had no sustenance
The war to maintain,
But lived upon chance,
And robbed aye between."

Scotland, at the time when Queen Marguerite kept her court, the Christmas of 1304, at high Dunfermline,[1] seemed to lie bleeding at the feet of Edward; every fortress had surrendered excepting Stirling Castle, from whose unconquered heights the Royal Lion of Scotland still floated in the national banner.

Marguerite and Edward kept their royal state at Dunfermline until the last fatal wound was supposed

[1] Among the scanty notices of the residence of the queen's court at Dunfermline, there is in the household book of Edward I. a payment of forty shillings to John, the young son of John the Bailiff, as Boy Bishop in the chapel of Dunfermline, and forty shillings to Nicholas, the valet of the Earl of Ulster, for bringing the news of the defeat of Sir Simon Fraser and William Wallace, at Koppesowe, by Latimer, Segrave, and Ifford.

to be inflicted on Scotland, by the treacherous capture of Wallace and the fall of Stirling. Leaving Lord Segrave commander at Dunfermline, Edward and his queen commenced their celebrated triumphal progress homeward to England. Whether Edward brought Wallace in chains with him in this triumphal progress,[1] cannot be precisely determined, but his cruel execution was the commencement of the high festivities held by Edward and his young queen at Westminster, to celebrate the conquest of unhappy Scotland.[2]

While the atrocious execution of Wallace was perpetrated, Queen Marguerite and her court were making preparations for the grandest tournament ever celebrated in England since, as the chroniclers declare, the days of King Arthur's round table. On New Year's Day, 1306, this tournament was held at Westminster Palace, where Prince Edward received

[1] A tradition of Carlisle exists which points out the arch of the castle gateway as the spot where Wallace passed a night manacled in his cart, during his bitter progress through England. This circumstance favours the supposition that he was brought in the royal train, and that room could not be found in the castle to lodge the forlorn prisoner.

[2] We here subjoin the commencement of a song of malignant triumph, sung by the English, to commemorate the savage and unjust murder of this hero. We only disencumber the lines of their uncouth spelling. It is a specimen of English verse in the year 1305.—From the Harleian MSS., fol 61. Brit. Museum.

"With fetters and with gyves,
Wallace was y drawn,
From the Tower of London,
That many might know;
In a kirtle of borrel,[3]
Selcouth wise
Through Chepe,
And a garland on his head of the newest guise.

[3] Coarse cloth.

knighthood, and was invested with the principality of Wales; two hundred young nobles were knighted, and two of the king's grand-daughters married or betrothed.

The festival of St. John the Baptist, the same year, was likewise kept with grand ceremonial. Among the parliamentary rolls we meet with the following memoranda of this event. "Thomas de Frowick, goldsmith of London, prays King Edward for the payment of 22*l.* 10*s.* for a circlet of gold made for Marguerite Queen of England, to wear on the feast of St. John the Baptist." This goldsmith had previously made a rich crown for the queen, and by the orders of the king left his bill with John de Cheam and his fellows, who had neglected it, and being injured by the delay, he prays the king, in 1306, "for God's sake and the soul of his father, King Henry, to order payment;" he is answered "that he may take his bill to the King's Exchequer, adding to it the charge for certain cups and vases which he had likewise made, and the clerk of the Exchequer should pay him 440*l.* in part of his bill. Thus we find that Queen Marguerite was provided with a splendid state crown, though she was never crowned; a ceremony prevented by the poverty of the finances. Marguerite is the first queen, since the conquest, who was not solemnly crowned and anointed.

Queen Marguerite's beautiful sister, Blanche Duchess of Austria, died towards the close of 1305. Early in the succeeding year, prayers for her soul were commanded by King Edward to be solemnly observed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, because "she was the dear sister of his beloved consort Queen Marguerite." The king certainly bore no malice for the perfidy of

his former love, doubtless being convinced he had changed for the better.

From the royal household books may be gleaned a few particulars of the English court arrangements at this time. The King's state ship was called, in compliment to the queen, the Margaret of Westminster; it does not seem a ship of war, but a sort of royal yacht in which the king made his voyages when he went to the continent.

The queen allowed her chief minstrel who was called Guy of the Psaltery a stipend of 28*s.*; he received *bouche* of court (or board at court) and had the use of three horses when the queen was in progress. Guy of the Psaltery often received gratuities from King Edward, who was, as well as his young queen,[1] a lover of music and the fine arts, and frequently encouraged their professors, as may be seen by these articles of his expenditure:—To Melioro, the harper of Sir John Mautravers, for playing on the harp while the king was bled, 20*s.*

To Walter Luvel, the harper of Chichester, whom the king found playing on his harp before the tomb of St. Richard at Chichester cathedral, 6*s.* 8*d.* To John, the organist of the Earl of Warrenne, for playing before the king, 20*s.*[2]

The queen gave birth at Woodstock, in the thirtieth

[1] Household Book of Ed. I. pp. 7—95.

[2] Very different is another entry in the expenses of the music-loving hero. To seven women meeting the king on the road between Gask and Uggeshall, and singing before him as they had been accustomed to do in the time of King Alexander, 3*s.* Small in proportion is the benefaction bestowed by the conquering Edward on these Scotch songstresses, who might have sung maledictions on him in their dialect, for ought he knew to the contrary.

While music and sculpture had attained some degree of perfection in England at this time, other arts and sciences were in a strange state of

year of her husband's reign, to her second son Prince Edmund, who was afterwards the unfortunate Earl of Kent. About this time twenty-six pieces of dimity were given out from the king's wardrobe stores to make queen Marguerite a feather bed,[1] and cushions for her charrette.

Instead of finding the national rolls and records burdened with notices of oppressive exactions made by the queen-consort, as in the case of Eleanor of Provence, it is pleasant to observe that Marguerite's charitable kindness pervades these memorials, seen by few, and by still fewer appreciated. In the exchequer rolls exist many requisitions from the queen, ordering that debtors for fines due to her may be pardoned their debts, and more than one petition "that debtors of her dear lord the king may have time extended or be excused." One of these royal supplications is curious, and proves that the queen and her two little sons, Thomas and Edmund, prevailed on King Edward to pardon their dear friend, the Lady Margaret Howard,[2] a debt owed by that lady to the crown.

barbarous ignorance. The earliest notice of medical practice is to be found, at this era, in the Latin work of Gaddesden, physician at the court of Queen Marguerite. This learned doctor, describing his treatment of Prince Edward in the small-pox, thus declares his mode of practice: "I ordered the prince to be enveloped in scarlet cloth, and that his bed and all the furniture of his chamber should be of a bright red colour; which practice not only cured him, but prevented his being marked." More by good luck than good management; assuredly it may be supposed that Gaddesden wished to stare the red inflammation of the small-pox out of countenance by his glare of scarlet reflections! He adds in his Rosa Anglorum, that he "treated the sons of the noblest houses in England with the red system, and made good cures of all." In this childish state was the noble act of healing at the court of Marguerite.

[1] Household Book of Edward I.

[2] The name is spelled *Hereward* in the French; the order was sent by the queen to the Barons of Exchequer. (Madox's History of the Exchequer.) The Lady Margaret Howard was a widow, and the debt some copyhold fine.

As Prince Thomas, the eldest son of Queen Marguerite, was only six years old, and the infant Edmund much younger, it may be judged who prompted the young petitioners, and how the queen must have made the caresses of her infants work on the heart of their great father.

"To the honourable father in God, Walter Bishop of Chester, treasurer to our lord, king, and father, Edmund son of the king, salutes in great love. As our dear lady, madame the queen, has required, we would that you would grant to our good friend *ma dame* Marguerite, late wife of Monsieur Robert Hereward, the remission of her debt. Written at Northampton, June 15."[1]

Prince Thomas and the queen each wrote letters to the same effect, that their good friend may be spared her payment to the exchequer.

Marguerite of France is the first instance of a queen consort of England, who ventured to stand between a mighty Plantagenet in his wrath and his intended victim. We learn by the statement contained in an act of pardon by Edward I., that Godfery de Coigners "had committed the heavy transgression and malefaction of making the coronal of gold that crowned the king's rebel and enemy, Robert de Brus in Scotland, and that he had secretly hidden and retained this coronal till a fitting occasion, but that these treasonable doings had since been discovered and convicted by the king's council." No doubt Godfrey the goldsmith would have been dealt with according to the tender mercies shown to Wallace and Fraser, if he had not found a friend in queen Marguerite; "for," says Edward I., "we pardon

[1] Folio ii. 1048.

him solely at the intercession of our dearest consort, Marguerite queen of England."[1]

The citizens of Winchester were likewise deeply indebted to Queen Marguerite, whose beneficent interference relieved them from the terrible consequences of King Edward's displeasure. To the mayor of Winchester had been confided the safe keeping of Bernard Pereres, a hostage of some importance whom the city of Bayonne had delivered to the king as a pledge of their somewhat doubtful loyalty. Bernard made his escape. On which king Edward sternly commanded his sheriff of Hampshire to seize upon the city of Winchester and to declare its liberties void, thus reducing the free citizens to the state of feudal villeins. The mayor he loaded with an enormous fine of 300 marks and incarcerated him in the Marshalsea till it was paid. In despair the Winchester citizens appealed to the charity of queen Marguerite. She recollected that when she was first married she had been received at Winchester with the most affectionate demonstrations of loyalty; moreover, she remembered that her husband had given her a charter which entitled her to all the fines levied from the men of Winchester. Armed with this charter she went to her loving lord, and claimed the hapless mayor and his fine as her personal property. She then remitted half the fine, took easy security for the remainder, and set the mayor at liberty, nor did she cease pleading with her consort till he had restored to Winchester the forfeited charters.[2]

During her husband's absence in Scotland, queen Margureite retired for security to Winchester, where

[1] Rymer's Fœdera.
[2] Milner's Hist. of Winchester from the Trussel MS.

she was deservedly beloved; here she gave birth to a princess, her third, but the King's sixteenth child! The infant was called Eleanora, after Edward's first queen and his eldest daughter who was deceased at that time. The infant died in a few months.

Before King Edward reached the Scottish border he fell ill at Burgh on Sands. He survived a few days till the Prince of Wales came up with the remaining forces time enough to receive his last commands, which breathed implacable fury against the Scots. The dying warrior commanded his son "to be kind to his little brothers Thomas and Edward, and, above all, to treat with respect and tenderness his mother Queen Marguerite." While Edward I. remained unburied 100*l.* was paid by his treasurer John de Tunford for the expenses of the royal widow.[1]

"The *May*, Queen Marguerite," was married to King Edward in her eighteenth year: notwithstanding the disparity of their ages, they lived happily during a wedlock of eight years. The chroniclers of England record no fault or folly of Queen Marguerite; nothing exists to contradict the assertion of Piers, that she was "good withouten lack," and a worthy successor to Eleanora of Castile.

Like Adelicia of Louvaine, the queen of Henry I., Marguerite kept a chronicler to record the actions of her great lord. He was named John o' London, (not a very distinctive appellation;) but as we have given a personal sketch of Edward in his youth, we add a portrait of him in advanced life drawn under the superintendence of his royal widow.

"His head spherical; (this is the second instance in which we have found that the chroniclers of the

[1] Issue rolls.

middle ages notice the form of the head;) his eyes round, gentle and dove-like when pleased, but fierce as a lion's, and sparkling with fire, when he was disturbed; his hair crisp, his nose prominent and raised in the middle; his chest broad, his arms agile, his limbs long, his feet arched, his body firm and fleshy, but not fat. He was so strong and active, that he could leap into his saddle by merely putting his hand on it. Passionately fond of hunting, he was engaged with his dogs and falcons when not in war. He was seldom ill, and neither lost his teeth, nor was his sight dimmed with age. He was temperate, never wore his crown after the coronation, thinking it a burden; he went about in the plain garments of a citizen, excepting on days of festival." "What could I do more in royal robes, father, than in this plain gabardine?" said Edward once to a bishop, who remonstrated with him on his attire as unkingly.[1]

How so elegantly proportioned a man as Edward I. came to be surnamed Longshanks has been a question to all writers, since the opening of the stone sarcophagus in Westminster Abbey, when the body of this great warrior and legislator was found of just and fine proportions, without any undue length of legs; his stature was six feet two inches from scull to heel. It appears that the insulting epithet Longshanks was a *sobriquet* given by an incensed enemy, and first took its rise from a satirical song sung by the Scots when Edward laid siege to Berwick, being his first step in his ambitious invasion of Scotland.[2] Edward is said to have been so incensed at this song, that when he

[1] Camden's Remains.

[2] "They that were within the toune defended it *orpedly*, (manfully,) and they set on fire King Edward's ships, and sang a scorn.

had stormed Berwick, he put every living soul to the sword, to the number of four thousand persons. In this siege he displayed the fine horsemanship for which he was noted.

"What did King Edward?
Peer he had none like,
Upon his steed Bayard,
First he won the dike."[1]

Besides this steed Bayard, another called Grey Lyard is celebrated in the barons' wars, as one on which he ever "charged forward;" likewise his horse Ferraunt, "black as a raven, on whose back, though armed in proof, Sire Edward could leap over any chain however high."[2] No chevalier of his day was so renowned for noble horsemanship, as this most accomplished monarch. Yet it is certain, that all which finally remained from his ambitious war in Scotland, was the insulting *sobriquet* of Longshanks.

The original MS. of the queen's chronicler, John o' London, is a great curiosity. It is written in Latin on vellum, very finely and legibly penned, and ornamented with initial letters, illuminated with gold and colours; the centres of the most of these are unfinished, and the manuscript itself is a fragment. The description of Edward's person is accompanied by an odd representation of his face in the midst of an initial letter. The features bear the same cast as the portraits of the

"What wenith King Edward with his long shanks,
To win Berwick with all our unthanks,
Gaes pyke him,
And when he has hit,
Gaes dike him."

[1] Piers Langtoft. (*Additions to Robert of Gloucester.*)

[2] Piers Langtoft. Meaning the chains used in defensive warfare to guard gates and drawbridges.

king; there is the small haughty mouth, the severe penetrating eyes, and the long straight nose; the king is meant to be shown in glory, but the head is surrounded with three tiers of most suspicious-looking flames. However, such as it is, it doubtless satisfied the royal widow, to whom the work was dedicated. "The noble and generous matron Margareta, by the grace of God, queen of England, invites all men to hear these pages." The plan of the oration is to describe the doleful bewailings of all sorts and conditions of persons for the loss of the great Edward. Of course the lamentation of the royal widow holds a distinguished place in the *commemoratio*. It commences thus: "The lamentable commendation of Margareta the Queen. Hear, ye isles, and attend my people, for is any sorrow like unto my sorrow? Though my head wears a crown, joy is distant from me, and I listen no more to the sound of my cithara[1] and organs. I mourn incessantly, and am weary of my existence. Let all mankind hear the voice of my tribulation, for my desolation on our earth is complete." * * * The queen's chronicler proceeds to paraphrase the lament for Saul and Jonathan; at length he remembers the royal Marguerite by adding, "At the foot of Edward's monument, with my little sons, I weep and call upon him. When Edward died, all men died to me."

These lamentations for a husband more than seventy, from a widow twenty-six, seem exaggerated, yet the after life of the royal Marguerite proved their sincerity

Although Queen Marguerite appeared in public earlier than was usual for the etiquette of royal widowhood in the fourteenth century, it was in obedience to

[1] Harp.

the dying commands of her royal lord, whose heart was set on a French alliance. Soon after her husband's death she went to Boulogne with her son-in-law, and assisted at his marriage with her niece Isabella.

After she returned to England she lived in retirement, spending her magnificent dower in acts of charity, and in the encouragement of historians and architects. While she lived, her niece Isabella led a virtuous and respectable life. Marguerite did not survive to see the infamy of this near relative, or the domestic wretchedness of her stepson, with whom she had always lived on terms of affection and amity.

Marguerite is the first queen of England who bore her arms with those of her husband in one scutcheon; her seal is affixed to the pardon of John de Dalyeng, which pardon she had procured of her son-in-law, in the ninth year of his reign. We trace the life of this beneficent queen dowager by her acts of kindness and mercy.[1]

Queen Marguerite's principal residence was Marlborough Castle on the borders of the forest of Savernake; it was there she died at the early age of thirty-six, on the 14th of February, 1317. King Edward II.'s household book has the following entry relative to this event.

"Sent by the King's order, to be laid upon the body of the Lady Marguerite, late queen of England, by the hands of John de Hausted, at Marlborough, the 8th of March, two pieces of Lucca cloth."[2]

[1] The seal is of red wax, with the lions of England on the right side, and her own fleur-de-lis on the left. They are emblazoned on a shield, and not on a lozenge.—See *Sandford*, p. 120.

[2] Lucca cloth was an Italian manufacture of silk striped with gold; many other mortcloths were provided by Edward II., to show his respect

Also at the place of its final destination, the Grey Friars; various other pieces of Lucca cloth were to be laid on her body at the expense of the king. She was buried at the Grey Friars church, the magnificent structure which she had principally founded;[1] her body was buried before the high altar, wrapped in the conventual robe of the Franciscans.

The splendid monument raised to the memory of this beneficent woman was destroyed by the acquisitiveness of Sir Martin Bowes, Lord Mayor, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the Grey Friars church was made parochial, he, to the indignation of the antiquary Stow, sold Queen Marguerite's tomb and nine others of royal personages, together with a number of gravestones, for fifty pounds.

Marguerite left her two sons joint executors to her will. Edward II. empowered his dearest brothers, "Thomas Earl of Norfolk, Earl Marshal, and Edmund of Woodstock, co-executors, by the testament of our mother of good memory, Marguerite, late Queen of England, to execute the said testament, and to have all goods and chattels that belonged to the said queen, and all her corn on her manors, whether housed or growing green in the earth, from the 14th day of February last, when she died, 1318. They are to receive all debts due to the queen dowager, and pay what she owes, according to her will."[2] The troubles of the

for his stepmother's memory. These rich palls were the fees of the officiating priests at every church where the royal corpse rested on its progress to its place of sepulture.

[1] Stow. She began the choir in 1306, and finished it in her widowhood. She left by her will one hundred marks to this church. This foundation is now Christ Church, Newgate. Part of Marguerite's original building is the cloister of the school.

[2] Parliamentary Rolls.

reign of Edward II. prevented the debts of the widow of his father from being paid; as we find the following petition concerning them.

In the eighth year of Edward III. there is a petition to Parliament,[1] from Thomas Earl of Norfolk, Marshal of England, and executor of the testament of Queen Marguerite his mother, praying "that the king will please to grant of his good grace that the debts of the deceased queen may be forthwith paid by his exchequer, according to the order of King Edward II. whom God assoil."

Queen Marguerite is the ancestress of all our English nobility bearing the great name of Howard; the honours of her son Thomas Plantagenet, Earl Marshal, were carried into this family by his descendant, Lady Margaret Mowbray, marrying Sir Robert Howard. The Howards,[2] through this queen, unite the blood of St. Louis with that of the mightiest of the Plantagenet monarchs.

[1] Parliamentary Rolls.

[2] Some of the most illustrious characters among the English nobility both as literati and warriors, have belonged to this family. Six distinct branches of the ducal family of Howard, descendants of queen Marguerite and Edward I., are still extant.

Firstly, the Norfolk line, represented by Bernard Edward duke of Norfolk.

Secondly, the elder line of Suffolk and Berkshire, represented by the Hon. Mrs. Greville Howard, heiress of Castle Rising, Levens Hall, &c. &c.

Thirdly, the younger line of Suffolk, represented by Thomas Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire.

Fourthly, the Carlisle line, represented by George Earl of Carlisle.

Fifthly, the Corby line, whose representative is Henry Howard, esq., of Corby Castle, author of the Howard Memorials. The patriarch of the Carlisle and Corby branches was the celebrated Lord William Howard, surnamed "Belted Will," grandson of the illustrious Earl of Surrey beheaded by Henry VIII. In the lines of Carlisle and Corby, the literary tastes of their renowned ancestor are revived.

Sixthly, the Effingham line, whose representative is Kenneth Alexander, Earl of Effingham, the descendant of the admiral who defeated the invincible Armada.

The heiress of her second son, Edmund Earl of Kent, married first Sir Thomas Holland, and then Edward the Black Prince: through her this queen was ancestress of the nobility who bore the name of Holland, which name became extinct in the wars of the Roses.

ISABELLA OF FRANCE,

SURNAMED THE FAIR.

QUEEN OF EDWARD II.

CHAPTER I.

Isabella's parentage—Both parents reigning sovereigns—Her portion—Affianced to the Prince of Wales—Her great beauty—Her marriage—Nuptial festivities—Sails for England with Edward II.—Summons for ladies to wait on her at Dover—Her wardrobe—Her coronation—Peeresses first summoned thereto—Slights offered to Isabella—Queen's complaints—Revenues—Her popularity—Her jealousy of Gaveston—Civil war—Queen's charity—Mediates peace with barons—Birth of her eldest son—Presents to her servants—Queen goes to France with the king—Return—Obtains amnesty—Conjugal happiness—Birth of her second son—Queen's churching robe—Birth of her eldest daughter—Gifts to queen's nurse and servants—King's grants to Isabella—Her residence at Brotherton—Roger Mortimer—Queen's pilgrimage to Canterbury—Insolence of Lady Badlesmere—Indignation of the queen—Isabella excites the civil war—Birth of Princess Joanna in the Tower—Isabella's first acquaintance with Mortimer—Her influence with the king—Mortimer's plots—His escape—Queen's jealousy of the Despencers—Deprived of her revenues—Her French servants dismissed—Complaints to her brother—Estrangement of the king—Isabella mediatrix with France.

SINCE the days of the fair and false Elfrida, of Saxon celebrity, no queen of England has left so dark a stain on the annals of female royalty, as the consort of Edward II., Isabella of France. She was the eleventh queen of England from the Norman Conquest, and with the exception of Judith, the consort of Ethelwolph, a princess of higher rank than had ever

espoused a king of England. She was the offspring of a marriage between two sovereigns ; Philip le Bel, king of France, and Jane, queen of Navarre. Three of her brothers, Louis le Hutin, Philip le Long, and Charles le Bel, successively wore the royal diadem of France.

Isabella was born in the year 1295, and, when but four years old, her name was included in the twofold matrimonial treaty which Geoffrey de Joinville, as the envoy of Edward I., negotiated between that monarch and the Princess Marguerite, sister of the King of France, and the Prince of Wales, with the Princess Isabella his daughter.

By the marriage articles it was covenanted, that Philip le Bel was to give his daughter a portion of eighteen thousand pounds, and that she was to succeed to the dower which Edward I. settled on his bride, the Princess Marguerite, her aunt.

A solemn act of betrothment took place at Paris in the year 1303,[1] when the pope's dispensation for this union was published. The Count of Savoy and the Earl of Lincoln as the procurators of Edward Prince of Wales, affianced the young princess on his part, in the presence of her illustrious parents, Philip IV. of France, and Jane, queen of France and Navarre. The Lady Isabella received the troth of her future lord Edward, son of the king of England, from the hand of Pere Gill, the archbishop of Narbonne. It appears that the young princess signified her assent to the marriage by putting her hand in that of Pere Gill, on condition that all the articles of the treaty were duly performed. She was then nine years old.[2]

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. ii. p. 928.

[2] Rymer's Fœdera.

Edward I. was so desirous of this alliance, that among his deathbed injunctions to his heir, he charged him on his blessing to complete his engagement with Isabella. This was, in truth, the only command of his dying sire, to which Edward II. thought proper to render obedience; such was his haste to comply with a mandate that happened to be in accordance with his own inclination, that before the obsequies of his deceased king and father were performed, he dispatched the bishops of Durham and Norwich, with the earls of Lincoln and Pembroke, to the court of France, to appoint a day for the solemnization of his nuptials.

The reports of the personal charms of his intended bride had indeed made so lively an impression on the mind of Edward II., that he is reproached by the chroniclers of his reign with having lost the kingdom of Scotland through his impatience to complete his marriage with her.[1] When he was apprized that all the arrangements for his marriage were concluded, though perfectly aware that his recognition as king of Scotland depended on his remaining there till the important affairs which required his presence were settled, he treated every consideration of political expediency with lover-like contempt, and hasted to the fulfilment of his contract with the royal beauty. There was the less cause for such unreasonable haste, since the fair Isabella had scarcely completed her thirteenth year at the time of her espousals.

Great preparations were made at Westminster Palace for the reception of the young queen. The royal apartments which had been burnt down in the pre-

[1] Annals of St. Augustin. Rapin. Walsingham.

ceding reign, and had been rebuilt, were completed and furnished; the gardens were new turfed and trelissed, the fish-ponds were drawn and cleaned, and a sort of pier jutting into the Thames, called the Queen's bridge, was repaired. The royal ship called the Margaret of Westminster, was, with her boats and barges, entirely cleaned and beautified. Various butteries and wardrobes were constructed in the vessel; not only by the command, but according to the device of the king himself, for his expected queen's accommodation.[1] After appointing his recalled favourite, Piers Gaveston, guardian of the realm, Edward sailed early on Monday morning, January 22, 1308, accompanied by his mother-in-law, queen Marguerite, to meet his bride. He landed at Boulogne, where Isabella had already arrived with her royal parents. There King Edward performed homage for Guienne and Ponthieu to King Philip.

The next day, being the festival of the Conversion of St. Paul, the nuptials of Isabella and her royal bridegroom were celebrated in the famous cathedral church of Boulogne with peculiar magnificence. Four sovereigns and as many queens graced the bridal with their presence. These were the king and queen of France, the parents of the bride; Marie, queen dowager of France, her grandmother; Louis, king of Navarre, her brother, to whom Queen Jane, their mother, had resigned the kingdom she inherited; the king and queen of the Romans, the king of Sicily, and Marguerite, the queen dowager of England, Isabella's aunt. The archduke of Austria was also present, and the

1 Brayley and Brittons' History of Palace of Westminster, pp. 114, 116, 117.

most numerous assembly of princes and nobility that had ever met together on such an occasion.

The dowry of the bride was provided from the spoils of the hapless Knights Templars, who had been recently tortured, plundered, and murdered, by her father.[1] Like most ill-gotten gains, this money by no means prospered in the spending.

The beauty of the royal pair, whose nuptials were celebrated with this extraordinary splendour, created the greatest admiration; for the bridegroom was the handsomest prince in Europe, and the precocious charms of the bride had already obtained for her the name of Isabella the Fair.[2] Who of all the royal and gallant company, witnesses of these espousals, could have believed their fatal termination, or deemed that the epithet of She-wolf of France could ever have been deserved by the bride?

High feasts and tournaments were held for several days after the espousals, at which the nobility of four royal courts assisted. These festivities lasted nearly a fortnight. Edward and Isabella were married on the 25th of January, and on the 7th of February they embarked for England, and landed at Dover the same day. There is in the Fœdera a copy of the summonses that were sent to Alicia, the wife of Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk, the countess of Hereford and other noble ladies, by the regent Piers Gaveston, in the king's name, appointing them to be at Dover on the Sunday after the Purification of the Virgin Mary, to receive the newly-wedded queen, and to attend her on her progress to Westminster.[3]

[1] De la Moor, p. 1. Brit. Museum.

[2] Froissart says, she was one of the greatest beauties in the world.

[3] Rymer's Fœdera.

The king and queen remained at Dover two days, where Piers Gaveston joined him. The moment the king saw him, he flew to him, fell on his neck, and called him "brother;"[1] conduct which greatly displeased the queen and her uncles. From Dover the royal party proceeded to Eltham, where they remained till the preparations were completed for the coronation. Two of Isabella's uncles, Charles Count of Valois and Louis de Clermont, Count of Evreux, brothers of Philip le Bel;[2] the duke of Brabant, with the grand chamberlain of France, and many other nobles, came as guests to the coronation. This ceremonial was postponed till Quinquagesima Sunday, February 25th, one month after the nuptials of the king and queen. The royal circular in the Fœdera, addressed by King Edward to his nobles, in which "he commands their attendance with their consorts at Westminster, to assist at the coronation solemnity of himself and his consort, Isabella queen of England," is the first royal summons in which the wives of the peers of England are included.[3]

The young queen's outfit was magnificent.[4] She brought with her to England, two gold crowns ornamented with gems, a number of gold and silver drinking vessels, golden spoons, fifty silver porringers, twelve great silver dishes, and twelve smaller ones. Her dresses were made of gold and silver stuff, velvet, and shot taffety. She had six dresses of green cloth from Douay, six beautifully marbled, and six of rose scarlet,

1 Rymer's Fœdera. 2 Ibid.

3 Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iii. p. 59.

4 MSS. de la Bibliothêque Roi, vol. xxxiv. The amount is stated by M. Raumer, to be 28,179 livres, but the articles enumerated would cost a great deal more.

besides many costly furs. As for linen she had 419 yards for the bath alone; she was likewise endowed with six dozen coifs, probably nightcaps. She brought tapestry for her own chamber, figured in lozenges of gold, with the arms of France, England, and Brabant.

The king of France on the occasion of his daughter's nuptials, had likewise made his royal son-in-law a profusion of costly presents, such as jewels, rings, and other precious articles, all of which Edward immediately bestowed on his favourite Piers Gaveston, whose passion for finery was insatiable.[1] Such conduct was peculiarly calculated to excite the displeasure of a young girl, and Isabella naturally resented this improper transfer of her father's munificent gifts, which she regarded as part of her dower, and as heir-looms to her descendants.

The nobles took occasion of the anger manifested by the young queen against the haughty favourite, to signify to their sovereign, that unless Gaveston were banished from the court, they would not attend the approaching coronation. Edward, alarmed at an intimation which he knew amounted to a threat of withholding their oaths of allegiance, promised that everything should be arranged to their satisfaction at the parliament that was to meet directly after his inauguration.

At the coronation itself fresh discords were engendered. Thomas Earl of Lancaster, the son of Edward's uncle, Edmund Crouchback, bore Curtana, or the sword of mercy, and Henry of Lancaster, his brother, the royal rod surmounted with the dove. But the indignation of the nobles exceeded all bounds,

[1] Matthew of Westminster.

when it was found that the king had assigned the envied office of bearing St. Edward's crown to his unpopular favourite, who, on this occasion, was dressed more magnificently than the sovereign himself. This gave such offence to one of the earls of the blood-royal,[1] that nothing but the respect due to the presence of the young queen restrained him from slaying him within the sacred walls of the abbey.

The archbishop of Canterbury being absent from the realm at that period, the king and queen were consecrated and crowned by the bishop of Winchester.[2]

So great was the concourse of spectators at this coronation, that many serious accidents occurred through the eager desire of the people to obtain a sight of the beautiful young queen; and a knight, Sir John Bakewell, was trodden to death.

Gaveston had taken upon himself the whole management of the coronation ceremonial; and either his arrangements were made with little judgment, or his directions were perversely disobeyed, for it was from the beginning to the end a scene of the most provoking confusion and disorder. It was three o'clock before the consecration of the king and queen was over; and when we consider the shortness of the winter days, we cannot wonder at the fact stated, that though there was abundance of provisions of every

[1] Mills. Carte.

[2] The king's first offering was a pound of gold, fashioned in the likeness of a king holding a ring in his hand. His second was eight ounces of gold in the form of a pilgrim putting forth his hand to take the ring, or rather, we should think, to give it; for this device represented the legend of Edward the Confessor receiving the ring from St. John the Evangelist in Waltham forest, from whence Havering-bower derived its name. This very ring is declared by tradition to be the coronation ring her present majesty received at her inauguration.

kind, there was not a morsel served up at the queen's table before dark.[1] The lateness of the dinner-hour appears to have excited the indignation of the hungry nobles more than any other of Gaveston's misdeeds that day. The banquet was moreover badly cooked, and, when at last brought to table, ill served, and few of the usual ceremonies were observed, for the want of the proper officers to oversee and direct. In short, all classes were dissatisfied and out of humour, especially the queen, on whom many slights were put, but whether out of accident or wilful neglect is not stated.[2]

The French princes and nobles returned home in a state of great exasperation at the affronts which they considered their princess had received; and Isabella herself sent a letter to the king her father, full of complaints of her lord and his all-powerful favourite Gaveston.[3] This had the effect of inducing Philip le Bel to strengthen the party of the discontented barons against Gaveston with all his influence, and gave an excuse to the French party for commencing those intrigues which terminated so fatally at last for Edward II.

King Edward was at that time in great pecuniary distress, having emptied his treasury in gifts to Gaveston, so that he had not wherewithal to pay his coronation expenses, nor to supply his household. As for his young queen, she was wholly without money, which caused her great uneasiness and discontent.

It is possible that if Isabella had been of an age more suitable to that of her husband, and of a less haughty temper, her beauty and talents might have

[1] Carte. [2] Walsingham.
[3] Ibid.

created a counter-influence to that of the Gascon favourite, productive of beneficial effects; but at the period of his marriage Edward was in his three-and-twentieth year, and evidently considered a consort who was only entering her teens as entitled to a very trifling degree of attention, either as a queen or a wife. Isabella was, however, perfectly aware of the importance of her position in the English court; and even had she been as childish in mind as she was in age, she was too closely allied in blood to the great leaders of the disaffected peers of England, Thomas Earl of Lancaster, and his brother, Henry Earl of Derby, to remain quiescently in the back-ground. The mother of the above-named nobles, Blanche, of Artois, the queen dowager of Navarre, was Isabella's maternal grandmother,[1] consequently her sons by her second marriage with Edmund Earl of Lancaster were half-uncles to the young queen, and resolutely determined to act as her champions against Piers Gaveston, who was now allied to the royal family by his marriage with Margaret of Gloucester, the daughter of Edward's sister, Joanna of Acre.[2]

Gaveston was not only the Adonis of the English court, but remarkable for his knightly prowess, graceful manners, and sparkling wit. It was the latter qualification which rendered him peculiarly displeasing to the English nobles, whom he was accustomed to deride and mimic for the amusement of his thoughtless sovereign; nor was the queen exempted when he was dis-

[1] Milles' Catalogue of Honour. Brookes, Speed, &c. &c.

[2] The Barons were exasperated at this marriage, which made the favourite Edward's nephew; yet the earl of Gloucester, who was certainly the person whom it more nearly concerned, as he was the young lady's brother, appeared perfectly satisfied, and remained Gaveston's firm friend; and it is more than probable that the lady herself was quite agreeable to the union.

posed to display his sarcastic powers.[1] The sins of the tongue are those which more frequently provoke a deadly vengeance than any other offence, and Gaveston's greatest crime appears to have been the fatal propensity of saying unforgiveable things in sport. Isabella's father secretly incited the English barons to a combination against Gaveston, which compelled the king to promise to send him beyond seas. This engagement Edward deceitfully performed by making him viceroy of Ireland; which country his worst enemies own he ruled with great ability.

The queen's pecuniary distresses were then brought before the Lords,[2] and as they found there was no money in the treasury to furnish her with an income befitting her station, the revenues of the county of Ponthieu and Montrieul, the inheritance of the king's mother, were appropriated to her use. The king specified as his wish, "that his dearest consort, Isabella Queen of England, shall be honourably and decently provided with all things necessary for her chamber, and all expenses for jewels, gifts, and every other requisite."[3]

During the first year of Isabella's marriage with Edward II., her father, Philip le Bel of France, appears to have acquired some degree of ascendancy in the councils of the nation, for we observe several letters in Rymer's Fœdera from Edward to his father-in-law, in which he condescends to explain his conduct with regard to Gaveston to that monarch, and weakly solicits his mediation with his turbulent barons.

[1] Walsingham. [2] Carte.

[3] "Therefore he is pleased to assign the lands of Ponthieu, &c., for her use, to provide her with such things; and he directs Richard de Rokeslie, his seneschal of that province, to give the deputies of the queen peaceful possession of the demesnes."—*Fœdera*, vol. iii., May, 14th, 1380.

The following year Gaveston took occasion to return to England to attend a tournament at Wallingford.[1] The magnificence of his retinue, and the great number of foreigners by whom he was surrounded, served to increase the jealous displeasure of the barons. Gaveston, according to his old practice, retaliated their hostility with scornful raillery, and on this occasion bestowed provoking *sobriquets* on the leaders of the feud against him. The earl of Pembroke, who was dark, thin, and sallow-complexioned, he called "Joseph the Jew;" the earl of Warwick, who foamed at the mouth when angry, "the wild boar of Ardenne;" and the earl of Lancaster, from his affecting a picturesque style of dress, "the stage-player;"[2] and in like manner characterised the rest of the party, either from their peculiarities or defects. These insults were not only treasured up against a fearful day of reckoning, but had the effect of stirring up such a storm in the court, as made the throne of his royal master totter under him.

The queen, her uncle the earl of Lancaster, and all the baronage of England, made common cause against Gaveston; and Edward, not daring to oppose so potent a combination, dismissed his favourite to Guienne. At parting, the king lavished on Gaveston, all the jewels of which he was possessed, even to the rings, brooches, buckles, and other trinkets, which his young and lovely consort had at various times presented to him as tokens of regard. Nothing could be a greater proof of folly than such a proceeding, which was sure to create feelings of grief or resentment in the bosom of a high-spirited girl of fifteen.[3]

[1] Walsingham. [2] Thomas Walsingham.

[3] Edward's want of judgment was equally perceptible in all his actions; his thoughtless profusion had been the means of involving him in pecuniary embarrassments, so that he was compelled to send precepts of such

Queen Isabella was at that time much beloved by the nation, and we hear no more of her complaints of conjugal infelicity till the year 1312, when, to her great displeasure, as well as that of the nobles, the king recalled Gaveston, and made him his principal secretary of state.[1]

All the affairs of the realm were under his control, and no one could obtain access to the sovereign except through him; he was accused withal of leading the king into a reckless course of dissipation, very offensive and injurious to the queen.

Isabella, not being of a temper to bear her wrongs in silence, angrily remonstrated with Gaveston; on which he so far forgot the respect due to her high rank, as to make a contemptuous reply; and when she passionately complained to the king of the affront she had received from his insolent favourite, Edward treated it as a matter of little importance. It appears evident that at this period Isabella was only considered by him as a petulant child.[2] Less perilous, however, would it have been to offer slights and provocations to a princess of more advanced age and mature judgment, for Isabella vented her indignant feelings by sending an eloquent detail of her wrongs to her father the king of France, to whom she wrote bitter complaints of her

as had the custody of his manors, to raise, lend, and borrow all the money they could for the expenses of his household. When these expedients failed, his affairs were brought before his parliament in 1310. His misconduct was highly censured, and a sort of reform commission was appointed to restrain his lavish expenditure, and to compel him to apply his income to the payment of his debts and the maintenance of his household, and otherwise to circumscribe his authority for the space of one year. The commissioners consisted of seven bishops, eight earls, and six barons who were called ordainers.—*Walsingham. Brady.*

[1] Walsingham. Rapin.

[2] Walsingham.

royal husband's coldness and neglect, describing herself "as the most wretched of wives, and accusing Gaveston of being the cause of all her troubles, by alienating King Edward's affection from her, and leading him into improper company."

King Edward's letters at the same period to the father of his queen are written in the most slavish style of prostration,[1] and he constantly applies to him for counsel and assistance in his internal troubles, apparently unconscious that his "dearest lord and father," as he calls the treacherous Philip, was the secret agitator by whom his rebel peers were incited to disturb his dreams of pleasure.[2]

It is remarkable that Isabella's name is mentioned but once in Edward's letters to the king her father, and then merely to certify "that she is in good health, and will (God propitious) be fruitful."[3]

It was not, however, till the fifth year of Isabella's marriage with Edward II., that any well-grounded hope existed of her bringing an heir to England; and the period at which this joyful prospect first became apparent was amidst the horrors of civil war.

The earl of Lancaster, at the head of the malcontent barons, took up arms against the sovereign in the year 1312, in order to limit the regal authority, and to compel Edward to dismiss Piers Gaveston from his councils. Isabella accompanied her lord and his favourite to York, and shared their flight to Newcastle; where, not considering either Gaveston or himself safe from the victorious barons who had entered York in triumph, Edward, in spite of all her tears and passionate entreaties to the contrary, abandoned her, and took

[1] Walsingham. [2] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iii.
[3] Rymer's Fœdera.

shipping with Gaveston for Scarborough.[1] The forsaken queen, on the advance of the confederate barons, retired to Tynemouth. During her residence at Tynemouth Castle, Isabel employed her time in charity and almsdeeds: of this most interesting evidence appears in the royal household-book for 1312.

"October 9.—To little Thomeline, the Scotch orphan boy, to whom the queen, being moved to charity by his miseries, gave food and raiment to the amount of six and sixpence." But Isabella's good work did not stop with feeding and clothing the poor destitute creature; she provided for the future welfare of little Thomeline, for we find another entry:

"To the same orphan, on his being sent to London to dwell with Agnes, the wife of Jean, the queen's French organist; for his education, for necessaries bought him, and for curing his maladies, fifty-two shillings and eight-pence."

While the queen remained disconsolate at Tynemouth, Lancaster, who had got possession of Newcastle, sent a deputation to his royal niece "with assurances of her safety," explaining "that their sole object was to secure the person of the favourite."

The king meantime having left Gaveston in the strong fortress of Scarborough,[2] proceeded to levy forces in the midland counties for his defence. The indignation of the men of the north of England had, however, been so greatly excited at his neglect and desertion of the queen, while in a situation which required more than ordinary sympathy and tenderness,

[1] Guthrie.

[2] (Guthrie.) Gaveston was taken very ill at Newcastle; for there is an entry in the household-book of Edward II.—"To master William de Bromtoft, a physician, for his attendance on Sir Piers de Gaveston, during his illness at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, two pounds."

that they rose *en masse* to storm her adversary in his shelter; and Gaveston being destitute of provisions or the means of standing a siege, surrendered to the confederate lords, on condition of being safely conducted to the king, and allowed free communication with him previously to his trial before the parliament.

In violation of the articles of this treaty, which the earl of Lancaster and the rest of the confederate barons had solemnly sworn to observe, Gaveston was brought to a sham trial and beheaded at Blacklow-hill, near Warwick, on a spot which in memory of the tragedy committed there, is called Gaveshead.

The barons enjoyed the extreme satisfaction of ransacking the baggage of the luckless favourite, where they found many of the crown jewels, some articles of gold and silver plate belonging to the king, and a great number of precious ornaments which had been presented to the king by Queen Isabella, his married sisters, and other persons of high rank. There is a minute list of these valuables in Rymer's Fœdera, and the catalogue is indeed likely enough to have excited the indignation of the jealous peers, who, on the greenhill-side, sat in relentless judgment on the man whom the king delighted to honour.[1]

Notwithstanding her avowed hostility against Gaveston, there is no reason to suppose that Isabella was in the slighest degree implicated in his murder, though his misconduct to her was one of the principal grounds of accusation used by the earl of Lancaster against him.

[1] Among other frivolous charges that were brought against Gaveston by the associate barons, he was accused of being the son of a witch, and of having obtained his influence over the mind of his sovereign by the practice of sorcery. His mother had been actually burnt for sorcery in Guienne.

When Edward received the tidings of the tragic fate of the companion of his childhood, he was transported with rage and grief, and declared his intention of inflicting a deadly vengeance on the perpetrators of the outrage. He sullenly withdrew from London to Canterbury, and finally joined the queen at Windsor, where she was awaiting the birth of their first child.[1]

This auspicious event took place on the 13th day of November, at forty minutes past five in the morning, in the year 1312,[2] when Isabella, then in the eighteenth year of her age and the fifth of her marriage, brought into the world the long-desired heir of England, afterwards that most renowned of our monarchs, Edward III., surnamed of Windsor, from the place of his birth.

The gloom and sullen sorrow in which the king had been plunged ever since the death of Gaveston, yielded to feelings of paternal rapture at this joyful event, and he testified his approbation by bestowing on John Lounges, valet to the queen, and Isabel his wife, twenty pounds, and settled the same on them as an annual pension for life.[3]

Scarcely less delighted were Isabella's uncle, the Count of Evreux, and the French nobles who were then sojourning in England, at the birth of the royal infant, who was remarkable for his beauty and vigour. They entreated the king to name the young prince, Louis, after the heir of France and the Count of Evreux; but the idea was not agreeable to the national feelings of the English in general, and it was insisted by the nobles that the new-born heir of England should receive the name of his royal father and renowned grandfather, Edward. Four days after his birth, he was baptized

[1] Walsingham. [2] Rymer's Fœdera.
[3] Pyne's Royal Palaces.

with great pomp in the old chapel of St. Edward, in the castle of Windsor.[1]

Isabella's influence, after this happy event, was very considerable with her royal husband, and at this period her conduct was all that was prudent, amiable, and feminine. It was through her mediation that a reconciliation was at length effected between King Edward and his barons,[2] and tranquillity restored to the perturbed realm. Before the amnesty was published, Queen Isabella visited Aquitaine in company with her royal husband; from thence they went to Paris, where they remained at the court of Philip the Fair nearly two months, enjoying the feasts and pageants which the wealthy and magnificent court of France provided for their entertainment. Plays were represented on the occasion, being mysteries and moralities for amusement and admonition, entitled, the "The Glory of the Blessed and the Torments of the Damned."

Through the earnest entreaties of the queen, the long-delayed pardon was published by King Edward, October 13th, 1313, without any exceptions; and the royal deed of grace expressly certifies "that this pardon and remission is granted by the king through the prayers of his dearest companion, Isabella queen of England."[3] The parliament met amicably, and the

[1] The ceremony was performed by Arnold, cardinal priest, and the royal babe had no less than seven godfathers; namely, Richard, bishop of Poictiers; John, bishop of Bath and Wells; William bishop of Worcester; Lewis, Count of Evreux, uncle to the queen; John duke of Bretagne and earl of Richmond; Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke; and Hugh le de Spencer; but there is not the name of one godmother recorded. A few days after his birth, his fond father granted to his dearly-prized heir, his new and blameless favourite, the county of Chester, to be held by him and his heirs for ever; also the county of Flint. Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iii.

[2] Walsingham. [3] Rymer's Fœdera.

barons solemnly made their submission on their knees to the sovereign in Westminster Hall before all the people,[1] Soon after, the earl of Warwick, the most active agent in the death of Gaveston, dying suddenly, it was industriously circulated by his friends that he had been taken off by poison. The barons mistrusted the king, and Queen Isabella was the only link that kept them from open war.

The year 1314 commenced with active preparations on the part of the king for renewing the war with Scotland.[2] Stirling, so appropriately designated by the chroniclers of that stormy era, *Striveling*, was then besieged by the energetic Bruce, and it was for the relief of that important possession that the laggard heir of the conqueror of Scotland at length crossed the Tweed. He met with a decisive overthrow at Bannockburn. Queen Isabella frequently resided at York and Brotherton, to be near the king during his northern campaign. In the ninth of Edward II, an information was brought before the king's council in the exchequer, against Robert le Messager, for speaking irreverent or indecent words against the king. He was tried by a jury, and found guilty; for some reason, however, the queen induced the archbishop of Canterbury to become his bail, and on that surety he was released from prison.[3]

In the month of September, 1316, King Edward was

[1] Walsingham.

[2] Robert Bruce showed no slight judgment of character when he thus spoke of the contrast between the first Edward of England and the second Edward. "I am more afraid of the bones of the father dead, than of the living son; and, by all the saints, it was more difficult to get half a foot of land from the old king, than a whole kingdom from the son."—*Matthew of Westminster.*

[3] Madox.

joined by his royal consort, queen Isabella, at York, who had remained at Eltham for her confinement, as there is an entry soon after in the king's household book: "To Sir Eubulo de Montibus, for bringing the first news to the king of the happy delivery of queen of her son John of Eltham, £100."

There is likwise a reward to the queen's messenger for announcing the first tidings of the queen's arrival at York, September 27th. The queen sent costly presents to the new Pope John, of copes embroided with large pearls, bought of Catherine Lincoln, and a cope embroidered by Rosia de Burford. To the same pope Queen Isabella sent a present through Don John de Jargemoc, her almoner, of an incense boat, a ewer, and a gold buckle set with divers pearls and precious stones, value £300.

"The queen sent her valet Goodwin Hawtayne, with letters to the bishop of Norwich and the earl of Lancaster, requesting them to come to Eltham to stand sponsors for her son John; his travelling expenses were sixteen shillings. John de Fontenoy, clerk of the queen's chapel received one piece of Turkey cloth, and one of cloth of gold for arraying the font in which the Lord John, son of the king, was baptized at Eltham, 30th August; to Stephen Taloise, the queen's tailor, was delivered five pieces of white velvet for the making thereof a certain robe, against the churching of the queen, after the birth of her said son."

The birth of the princess Eleanor took place in 1318, the household-book notes the king's gift of £333, "to the Lady Isabella, queen of England, for her churching feast, after the birth of the Lady Eleanora."

There are likewise notices of money thrown over the heads of various brides and bridegrooms as they stood

at the altar—the royal pair were present at their marriages, at Havering Bower, Woodstock, and Windsor—and for money given by the orders of the king at the chapel doors. Several other entries afford amusing information respecting the manners and customs of Edward the Second's court.

Vanne Ballard, for pieces of silk and gold tissue of fustian, and of flame-coloured silk, for the making cushions, for the charrettes of the queen and her ladies.

To Robert le Fermor, (the closer,) boot-maker of Fleet-street, for six pairs of boots with tassels of silk and drops of silver gilt, price of each pair five shillings, bought for the king's use.

Griffin, the son of Sir Griffin of Wales, was selected as one of the companions of the young Prince Edward, afterwards Edward III., at Eltham, by order of the king.

When the king and queen kept Twelfth-night, their presents were magnificent: to the king of the Bean, in one instance, Edward gave a silver gilt ewer, with stand and cover, and another year, a silver gilt bowl to match, as new year's gifts. To William Sal Blaster, valet of the Count of Poictiers, bringing to the king bunches of new grapes at Newborough, 28th of October, 10*s*.

Queen Isabel's chaplain was entitled to have the queen's oblatory money, of the value of *seven-pence*, redeemed each day of the year, except on the assumption of the Virgin, when the queen offered gold. To Dulcia Withstaff, mother of Robert, the king's fool, coming to the king at Baldock, at Christmas, ten shillings. To William de Opere, valet of the king of France, for bringing the king a box of rose-coloured sugar at York, on the part of the said king, his gift,

September 28th, two pounds ten shillings. To the Lady Mary, the king's sister, a nun at Amesbury, the price of fifteen pieces of tapestry, with divers coats of arms, bought of Richard Horsham, mercer of London, and given to the Lady Mary on her departure from court, home to Ambresbury, twenty-six-pounds. To Sir Nicholas de Becke, Sir Humphrey de Luttlebury, and Sir Thomas de Latimer, for dragging the king out of bed on Easter morning, Edward paid twenty pounds.

Edward II. in 1316, bestowed a considerable benefaction on Theophania de St. Pierre, his queen's nurse: besides fifty pounds sterling money, he gives this person, whom he calls lady of Bringnencourt, lands in Ponthieu, where Queen Isabella was dowered.[1] In the household-books of Thomas Lancaster, Stow found that ninety-two pounds had been presented by that prince to his royal niece's nurses and French servants.

In the twelfth year of his reign Edward II. granted to his consort Isabella the escuage belonging to him for the army of Scotland due from the knights' fees, which the queen held by grant for the term of her life.

King Edward's disasters in the north were succeeded by the most dreadful famine ever known in England, which lasted for nearly three years.[2]

The king and queen kept their court at Westminster,[4] during the Whitsuntide festival of 1317; and on

[1] Rymer's Fœdera vol. iii. [2] Madox.

[3] King Edward endeavoured to lower the enormous price of provisions by various statutes, but without effect, as the public misery was not caused by monopoly, but by dearth, which was felt even in his own palace; for on St. Lawrence's eve, 1314, it was with difficulty that bread could be procured for the sustentation of the royal family.—*Walsingham de la Moor.*

[4] The unpopularity of the king at this period tempted an impostor of the name of John Deydras, a tanner's son, to pretend that he was the true son of Edward I.; but who had been changed by his former nurse for him who so

one occasion, as they were dining in public in the great banqueting-hall, a woman in a mask entered on horseback, and riding up to the royal table, delivered a letter to the king. Edward, imagining that it contained some pleasant conceit or elegant compliment, ordered it to be opened and read aloud for the amusement of his courtiers; but to his great mortification it was a cutting satire on his unkingly propensities, setting forth in no measured terms all the calamities which his misgovernment had brought upon England. The woman was immediately taken into custody, and confessed that she had been employed by a certain knight. The knight boldly acknowledged what he had done, and said, "that supposing that the king would read the letter in private, he took that method of apprising him of the complaints of his subjects."[1]

The following year Robert Bruce laid siege to Berwick. Queen Isabella accompanied her lord into the north, and while he advanced to Berwick, she, with her young family, took up her abode at Brotherton, the former residence of her late aunt, Queen Margaret. This was a place of apparent security, as it was nearly a hundred miles from the scene of war; yet she was exposed to a very great peril while residing there, in the year 1319, during the absence of the king, in consequence of a daring attempt of Earl Douglas to surprise her in her retreat, and carry her off into Scotland. The monk of Malmsbury gives the following account of this adventure. "Douglas marched into England at the head of 10,000 men with great secrecy, and

unworthily filled the throne of that mighty sovereign. Deydras, having no evidence to support this assumption, was hanged for his treasonable attempt to excite sedition.—*Walsingham.*

[1] Walsingham.

nearly arrived at the village where Queen Isabella and her children resided, when one of his scouts fell into the hands of the archbishop of York, and the king's counsellor, who threatening him with tortures, the man promised him, if they would spare him, to confess the great danger their queen was in. The ministers laughed his intelligence to scorn, till he staked his life that if they sent scouts in the direction he pointed out, they would find Douglas and his host within a few hours' march of the queen's retreat. Alarmed by the proofs given by the man, they collected all their retinue, and all the men-at-arms York could furnish, and marched on a sudden to the queen's residence, with the tidings of her great danger: they brought her off directly to York, and afterwards, for the greater security, she was taken to Nottingham." Again, the Earl of Lancaster was blamed for treasonable correspondence with Robert Bruce, and it was affirmed that he had bribed Lancaster to contrive this diversion from the siege of Berwick with £40,000.

It was in 1321 that the storm gathered among the lords marchers, which led to the barons' wars, and brought Isabella and Roger Mortimer into acquaintance with each other.

[1] King Edward had married his new favourite, the young Despencer, to his great-niece Eleanor, one of the co-heiresses of his nephew Gilbert de Clare, aerl of Gloucester, who had been the most potent among the lords marchers of Wales, and a sort of lord paramount over them all. The warlike Mortimers, during the long minorities of the two last earls of Gloucester, had taken the lead among the marchers; and now the king's favourite, in right of his wife, assumed a sort of supremacy on the Welsh borders, and prevailed on the king to resume the grants of some of his late nephews' castles which he had given to the Mortimers. Those fierce chiefs flew to arms with their marchmen, and in the course of a few nights hurried Lady Despencer's inheritance with so hearty a good will, that they did many thousand pounds' worth of mischief. The leaders of this exploit were Lord Roger Mortimer of Chirk,

We now come to that eventful period when Isabella exchanged the lovely character of a peace-maker for that of a vindictive political agitator, and finally branded her once honoured name with the foul stains of adultery, treason, and murder. The circumstances which in the first instance led to this fearful climax of guilt were, as far as concerned Isabella, accidental.

On the 13th of October, 1321, the queen set out on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury, and proposing to pass the night at her own castle of Leeds, of which Bartholomew Badlesmere, one of the associated barons, was castellan, she sent her marshal and purveyors before her to announce her intention, and to order proper arrangements to be made for her reception.[1]

Badlesmere was absent at that time, and being deeply involved in the treasonable designs of the earl of Lancaster, had charged his lady to maintain the castle, though it was a royal demesne, being one of the dower palaces of the queens of England. Lady Badlesmere, feeling some mistrust of the real object of Isabella in demanding admittance for herself and train, replied with great insolence to the royal messengers, "That the queen might seek some other lodging, for she would not admit any one within the castle without an order from her lord."

While the dispute was proceeding between the Lady Badlesmere and the purveyors, the queen and her train arrived at the castle gates, and were received with a

and his nephew and heir Lord Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, who had been the ward and pupil of Gaveston. The extraordinary influence of the younger Mortimer exercised over the destiny of the queen requires these few words of explanation as to the origin of his rebellion.

[1] Walsingham. De la Moor.

volley of arrows, which slew six of the royal escort, and compelled the queen and her train to retreat with precipitation, and to seek other shelter for the night.[1]

The queen complained bitterly to the king of the affront she had received, and entreated him to avenge the murder of her servants, and the insolence of Lady Badlesmere in presuming to exclude her from her own castle.[2] Badlesmere had the folly to write the most insulting letter to the queen, in reply to the complaints that had been addressed to him of his wife's conduct, expressing his entire approval of what she had done. This conduct was aggravated by the fact that Badlesmere had very lately been one of the principal officers of the palace, and held the high station of steward to the royal household before Edward gave him the appointment of castellan of Leeds. The whole transaction implies some previous personal quarrel with the queen. Hitherto the queen had been on the most amicable terms with the barons, but as neither Lancaster nor any of the associates thought proper to express any reprobation of the disrespect with which she had been treated by their confederate, she determined to be revenged on all, and accordingly represented to the king that if he raised an army for the purpose of besieging Leeds Castle, he would eventually be enabled to use it for the extension of his kingly power.[3] The king would willingly have temporised, but the haughty spirit of Isabella would not permit him to delay becoming the minister of her vengeance. Edward published his

[1] Walsingham. De la Moor.

[2] Leeds Castle was a part of the splendid dower settled by Edward I. on Queen Margaret, Isabella's aunt, to which Queen Isabella had succeeded.—*Rymer's Fadera.*

[3] Rapin.

manifesto, setting forth the contempt with which "his beloved consort Isabella queen of England had been treated by the family of Bartholomew Badlesmere, who had insolently opposed her in her desire of entering Leeds Castle, and that the said Bartholomew Badlesmere had by his letters approved of this misconduct of his family, in thus obstructing and contumeliously treating the queen, for which cause a general muster of all persons between the ages of sixteen and sixty was called to attend the king in an expedition against Leeds Castle."[1]

A large force, of which the Londoners formed a considerable portion, was quickly levied, for the queen was the darling of the nation, and all were eager to avenge even the shadow of a wrong that was offered to her.

The lady Badlesmere, who was undoubtedly a notable virago, treated the royal threats with contempt, and with her seneschal Walter Colepepper defied both the king and his army when they appeared beneath the walls of Leeds Castle, which was well stored with provisions, and she confidently relied on receiving prompt relief from the associate barons. In this, however, she was disappointed, for the Earl of Lancaster had no intention to come to a rupture with the queen his niece. The castle of Leeds was in consequence compelled to surrender at discretion on the last day of October.

Immediate vengeance was taken by the king, for the assault on the queen and her servants, on the seneschal, Walter Colepepper, who, with eleven of the garrison, were hanged before the castle gates. Lady Badlesmere was committed to the Tower of London as a state prisoner, and was threatened with the same fate that had

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iii. [2] Walsingham. Rapin.

been inflicted on her agents; but it does not appear that she suffered any worse punishment than a long and rigorous imprisonment.[1] With all their faults, there is no instance of any monarch of the Plantagenet line putting a lady to death for high treason.

Flushed with his success at Leeds, King Edward recalled his banished favourites, the two Despencers, whose counsels quite accorded with the previous persuasions of the queen to use the military force, which he had levied for the reduction of Leeds Castle, for the purpose of repressing the power of the associate barons.[2]

Isabella was so deeply offended with the barons, as the allies of the Badlesmeres, that she not only refused to employ her influence in composing the differences between them and the king, but did everything in her power to influence the mind of her lord against them.[3]

Lancaster was taken at the battle of Boroughbridge, where the sovereign fought in person against the associate barons, March 16th, 1322. The earl, and ninety-five of his adherents, were conducted as prisoners to Pontefract Castle, where the king sat in judgment upon him, with a small jury of peers, by whom he was sentenced to lose his head. The queen was not aware of her uncle's sentence till after his execution, which took place only a few hours after his doom was pronounced. Probably this indecent haste was used to prevent the possibility of the queen's intercession being used in behalf of her kinsman.[4]

While King Edward was battling the rebellious ba-

[1] Bayley's History of the Tower.

[2] Walsingham. Rapin. [3] Ibid.

[4] Bartholomew Badlesmere, the primary cause of the war, was taken at

rons, the queen, for greater security, took up her abode in the Tower. In this royal fortress she gave birth to her youngest child, the Lady Joanna, who from that circumstance was called Joanna de la Tour.[1]

Some time before the birth of the Princess Joanna, the two Mortimers, uncle and nephew having been taken in arms against the king, were brought to the Tower as state prisoners under sentence of death and confiscation of their great estates.[2] Roger Mortimer, Lord of Chirk, the uncle, died of famine through the neglect or cruelty of his gaolers in failing to supply him with the necessaries of life, it has been said, soon after his capture. Roger Mortimer, the nephew, was in the pride and vigour of manhood, and possessed of strength of constitution, and energy of mind, to struggle with any hardship to which he might be exposed. The manner in which he contrived, while under sentence of death in one of the prison lodgings of the Tower of London, to create so powerful an interest in the heart of the beautiful consort of his offended sovereign, is not related by any of the chroniclers of that reign. It is possible however, that Isabella's disposition for intermeddling in political matters might have emboldened this handsome and audacious rebel to obtain personal interviews with her, under the colour of being willing to communicate to her the secrets of his party. He was the husband of a French lady, Jane de Joinville, the heiress of Sir Peter Joinville, and was in all probability only too well acquainted with the

Stowe Park, the seat of his nephew, the bishop of Lincoln, and ignominiously hanged at Canterbury.

[1] La Moor. Walsingham. Bayley's History of the Tower. Brayley. Britton, ditto.

[2] Walsingham, &c. De la Moor.

language that was most pleasing to the ear of the queen, and the manners and refinements of her native land, which in civilization was greatly in advance of the bellicose realm of England. Be this as it may, Mortimer was reprieved through the good offices of some powerful intercessor, and the king commuted his sentence of death into perpetual imprisonment in the Tower. This occasioned some astonishment, when it was remembered that Mortimer was the first who had commenced the civil war by his fierce attack on the lands of Hugh Despencer, who was his sworn foe, and had regained more than his former sway in the councils of King Edward; but at that time the influence of the queen was paramount to any other, and it was probably on this account that the deadly feud commenced between her and the two Despencers, which ended so fatally for both.[1]

About this period, we observe the following precept, addressed by King Edward to his treasurer and the barons of the exchequer, for the supply of his own and his queen's wardrobe.

[1] "Edward, by the grace of God, &c. &c.

"We command that ye provide sixteen pieces of cloth for the apparelling of ourselves and our dear companion, also furs, against the next feast of Christmas, and thirteen pieces of cloth for corsets for our said companion and her damsels, with naping linen[2] and other things of which we stand in need against the said feast; requiring you to assign to William Cassonces, the clerk of our wardrobe, one hundred and fifteen pounds, in such manner as may obtain prompt payment of the same for this purpose.

"Given at Langley, the 10th day of December, and of our reign the 15th."[3]

The king and Isabella spent their Christmas together, and it is probable that she availed herself of that

[1] Walsingham. De la Moor. Rapin.

[2] Table-linen.

[3] Rot. E. II. 47.

opportunity of obtaining not only so unconscionable an allowance of cloth for her corsets, but a reprieve from death for Mortimer.

In the succeeding year, 1323, we find the tameless border chief, from his dungeon in the Tower, organizing a plan for the seizure, not only of that royal fortress, but Windsor and Wallingford. Again was Mortimer condemned to suffer death for high treason, but through the agency of Adam Orleton, and Beck, Bishop of Durham, he obtained a respite.[1] On the 1st of August the same year, Gerard Alspaye, the valet of Segrave, the constable of the Tower, who was supposed to be in co-operation with him, gave the men-at-arms a soporific potion in their drink; and while the guards were asleep, Mortimer passed through a hole he had worked in his own prison, into the kitchen of the royal residence, ascended the chimney, got on the roof of the palace, and from thence to the Thames side by a ladder of ropes; the valet of Segrave and Lord Mortimer then took a sculler and rowed over to the opposite bank of the river, where they found a party of seven horsemen pertaining to Mortimer, waiting to receive their master. With this guard he made his way to the coast of Hampshire; from thence, pretending to sail to the Isle of Wight, the boat in reality conveyed the fugitives on board a large ship, provided by Ralf Botton, a London merchant, which was laying off the Needles: this ship landed them safely in Normandy; and from thence Lord Mortimer got to Paris.[2]

Edward was in Lancashire when he heard of the escape of Mortimer: he roused all England with a hue and cry after him, but does not seem to have the least

[1] Leland's Collectenea. [2] Rymer. Bayley's Hist. of the Tower.

idea of his destination, as he sought him chiefly in the Mortimers' hereditary demesnes, the marches of Wales.[1]

Directly Mortimer was in safety, the queen commenced her deep-laid schemes for the ruin of his powerful enemies, the Despencers, whom she taught the people to regard as the cause of the sanguinary executions of Lancaster and his adherents, though her own impatient desire of avenging the affronts she had received from Lady Badlesmere had been the means of exasperating the sovereign against that party. Now she protested against all the punishments that had been inflicted, and was among the first of those who pretended to regard Lancaster as a martyr and a saint.

The Despencers had succeeded in obtaining the same sort of ascendency over the mind of the king, that had been once enjoyed by Gaveston, and the whole authority of his feeble despotism was committed to their administration. Their first act was to curtail the revenues of the queen. This imprudent step afforded Isabella a plausible excuse for declaring open hostilities against them. No one had every offended her without paying a deadly penalty for their rashness.

She perceived that she had lost her influence with her royal husband, during his absence in the civil war in the north; and though it is evident that an illicit passion on her part had preceded the alienation of the

[1] "Mortimer," says the chronicle quoted by Drayton, "being in the Tower, ordered a feast for his birthday, and inviting there Sir Stephen Segrave constable of the Tower with the rest of the officers belonging to the same, gave them a sleepy drink provided him by the queen, by which means he got liberty for his escape: he swam the Thames to the opposite shore, the queen doubting much of his strength for such an exploit, as he had been long in confinement."

king's regard for her, she did not complain the less loudly of her wrongs on that account; neither did she scruple to brand the Despencers with all the accusations she had formerly hurled at Gaveston, charging them with having deprived her of the love of her royal husband.[1]

Isabella did not tamely submit to the loss of her power in the state. There was a fierce struggle for supremacy between her and the Despencers during the year 1324, which ended in the discharge of all her French servants, and the substitution of an inadequate pension for herself, instead of the royal demesnes, which had been settled on her by the king.[2]

Isabella wrote her indignant complaints of this treatment to her brother, Charles le Bel, who had just succeeded to the throne of France, declaring that she was held in no higher consideration than a servant in the palace of the king her husband, whom she styled "a gripple miser;"[3] a character which the thoughtless and prodigal Edward was very far from meriting. The king of France, exasperated by his sister's representations of her wrongs, made an attack on Guienne, which afforded an excuse to the Despencers for advising King Edward to deprive the queen of her last possession in England, the earldom of Cornwall. The king resumed this grant in a peculiarly disobliging manner, giving the queen to understand "that he did not consider it safe to allow any portion of his territories to remain in her hands, as she maintained a secret correspondence with the enemies of the state."[4]

The feuds between the royal pair proceeded to such

[1] Walsingham. De la Moor.
[2] Walsingham. Rapin. Speed.
[3] De la Moor. Speed.
[4] Walsingham. Rapin.

a height, that Isabella denied her company to her lord,[1] and he refused to come where she was.[2] The queen passionately charged this estrangement on the Despencers, and reiterated her complaints to her brother.

King Charles testified his indignant sense of his sister's treatment by declaring his intention of seizing all the provinces held by King Edward of the French crown, he having repeatedly summoned him in vain to perform the accustomed homage for them. Edward was not prepared to engage in a war for their defence, and neither he nor his ministers liked the alternative of a personal visit to the court of the incensed brother of Queen Isabella, after the indignities that had been offered to her.[3]

In this dilemma, Isabella herself obligingly volunteered to act as mediatrix between the two monarchs, provided she might be permitted to go to Paris to negotiate a pacification. Edward, who had so often been extricated from his political difficulties by the diplomatic talents of his fair consort, was only too happy to avail himself of her proposal.[4]

It has been asserted by many historians that Queen Isabella privately withdrew to France with her son, the prince of Wales, to claim the protection of her brother, Charles le Bel, against the king her husband, and his ministers the Despencers; but a careful reference to those authorities which may be called the fountain-heads of history,—the record rolls of that reign, will satisfactorily prove that she was sent as an accredited envoy from the deluded Edward, to negotiate this treaty with her royal brother.

[1] De la Moor.
[2] Carte. Rapin.
[3] Froissart.
[4] Ibid.

Froissart, who purposely veils the blackest traits of Isabella's character, her profound hypocrisy and treachery, represents her as flying from the barbarous persecutions of her husband and the Despencers, like some distressed queen of romance, and engaging by her beauty and eloquence all the chivalric spirits of France and Hainault to arm for the redress of her wrongs. He has succeeded in giving just such a colour to her proceedings as would be least offensive to her son Edward III., with whom, for obvious reasons, the whole business must have been a peculiarly sore subject.[1]

The propriety of the queen undertaking the mission to the court of France was debated first in the council, and afterwards in the parliament which met January 21st,[2] 1325, to consider the affairs of Guienne, when it was agreed that any expedient was better than pursuing the war.[3]

A hollow reconciliation was effected between Isabella and the Despencers, who were delighted at the prospect of her departure from England, and the royal pair parted apparently on terms of the most affectionate confidence and good-will.

Isabella sailed for France in the beginning of May, attended only by the Lord John Cromwell and four knights. She landed at Calais, and proceeded to Paris, where the first-fruit of her mediation was a truce be-

[1] It is to be remembered that Froissart, who, though a contemporary, was too young, at the time these events took place, to speak from his own knowledge, has followed what he calls the "true chronicle" of John le Bel, canon of St. Lambert of Liege, who was the favourite councillor and confessor of John of Hainault, the sworn champion of Queen Isabella, of whose iniquities the sly ecclesiastic is a subtle palliator, and has evidently done his best to mystify such parts of her conduct as were indefensible.

[2] Walsingham. Public Acts. [3] Ibid.

tween her brother and the king her husband. She then negotiated an amicable treaty, proposing the surrender of Guienne, already forfeited by the neglect of the feudal homage to the king of France, which was to be restored at her personal instances by her brother to the king of England on condition of his performing the accustomed homage, and remunerating the king of France for the expenses of the war. This was to take place at a friendly interview between the two monarchs at Beauvais.[1]

The Despencers, anticipating with alarm the great probability of the queen regaining her wonted ascendency over the mind of her royal husband, dissuaded him from crossing to the shores of France, even when his preparations for the voyage were completed. Isabella, who was well informed of these demurs, and perfectly understood the vacillating character of her husband, proposed to him that he should invest their son the prince of Wales with the duchy of Guienne and the earldom of Ponthieu, and send him as his substitute to perform the homage for those countries to the king, her brother, King Charles having signified his assent to such an arrangement, in compliance with her solicitations.

Edward, far from suspecting the guileful intentions of his consort eagerly complied with this proposal; and the Despencers, not being possessed of sufficient penetration to understand the motives which prompted the queen to get the heir of England into her own power, fell into the snare.

On the 12th of September, 1325, Prince Edward, attended by the bishops of Oxford, Exeter, and a

[1] Rymer's Fœdera.

splendid train of nobles and knights, sailed from Dover,[1] and, landing at Boulogne, was joined by the queen his mother on the 14th, who accompanied him to Paris, where his first interview with the king his uncle took place in her presence, and he performed the act of feudal homage on the 21st at the Bois de Vincennes.[2]

[1] Rymer's Fœdera.

[2] Act made at the wood of Vincennes by Edward, (son of Edward II.) in the presence of the queen his mother and many grandees of England . . . . . After the usual formula regarding the homage of Guienne, a clause is added, in these words — "And as for the country of Ponthieu, according to the protestation made by madame the queen of England, then present, the homage done by the prince her son was not in any way to prejudice her interests therein, and the said Edward promises to hold peace for his father; 1335, the 14th September."—Abstract of the French Act, copied from Harleian MSS.

ISABELLA OF FRANCE,

SURNAMED THE FAIR,

QUEEN OF EDWARD II.

CHAPTER II.

Isabella's intrigues—Queen and Prince recalled to England—Her disobedience—King Edward's letters—Barons invite her to invade England—Familiarities with Mortimer—Scandal at the French court—Isabella dismissed from France—Her visit to Hainault—Her voyage to England—Lands—Enthusiasm of the people—Proclamation—Her triumphal progress—Capture of the king—Londoners welcome the queen—Deposition of Edward II.—Queen's hypocrisy—Seizes the government—Exorbitant dower—Her ball prevented by a popular tumult—Murder of the king—Isabella's peace with Scotland—League against the queen—Her vindictive disposition—Follies of Mortimer—Parliament at Nottingham—Isabella's precautions—Mortimer taken prisoner—Her passionate intercession—His execution—Her imprisonment—Manner of spending her time there—Reports of her madness—Visits of her son—References to her in the Parliamentary Rolls—Her household at Castle Rising—Visited by Edward III. and Philippa—Death of Isabella—Hypocrisy in death—Entrance of her funeral into London—Buried by Mortimer's side.

THE wording of the treaty negotiated between Isabella and her brother, the king of France, was couched in such ambiguous terms, as to leave considerable matter for dispute between King Edward and that monarch, even after the required homage had been performed by the heir of England, for the fiefs held of the French crown. This difference, which regarded the province

of Agenois, had been contrived by Isabella, to afford a plausible pretext for prolonging her stay in Paris. She was there joined by her paramour Mortimer, and all the banished English lords who had fled from the persecutions of the Spencers flocked round her.[1] She held frequent councils and meetings with the declared enemies of King Edward's person and government, and she altogether avoided the commissioners,[2] by whose advice the king had appointed her to be guided. The English ambassadors were surprised and offended at the conduct of the queen, and the frivolousness of the pretences on which she from day to day delayed her departure from Paris. But Walter Stapleton, the loyal bishop of Exeter, whom she had endeavoured to draw into her conspiracy, withdrew to England, informed the king of her proceedings, and urged him to command her immediate return with the prince of Wales.[3] King Edward vainly issued his private letters and royal summonses to his consort and son for that purpose: his most preremptory orders were disregarded by Isabella, who asserted "that it was the intention of the Despencers to cause her to be put to death if she returned to England:" on which the king of France, her brother, wrote to King Edward, "that he could not permit her to return to him, unless she were guaranteed from the evil that was meditated against her by her enemies the Despencers."[4]

King Edward's manly and eloquent reply to this letter is preserved among the Close Record Rolls of the nineteenth year of his reign. We translate it from

[1] De la Moor. Walsingham. [2] Ibid.

[3] MS. Lives of the Lord Treasurers, by Francis Thynne, Esq., in the collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart., at Middle Hill.

[4] De la Moor. Walsingham. Rapin. Speed.

the ancient French copy, printed in the fourth volume of Rymer's Fœdera.

"VERY DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER,

"We have received, and well considered, your letters delivered to us, by the honourable father in God, the bishop of Winchester, who has also discoursed with us, by word of mouth, on the contents of the said letters.

"It seems that you have been told, dearest brother, by persons whom you consider worthy of credit, that our companion, the queen of England, dare not return to us, being in peril of her life, as she apprehends, from Hugh le Despencer. Certes, dearest brother, it cannot be that she can have fear of him, or any other man in our realm; since, *par Dieu!* if either Hugh, or any other living being, in our dominions, would wish to do her ill, and it came to our knowledge, we would chastise him in a manner that should be an example to all others; and this is, and always will be, our entire will, as long as, by God's mercy, we have the power. And, dearest brother, know certainly, that we have never perceived that he has, either secretly or openly, by word, look, or action, demeaned himself, otherwise than he ought, in all points, to do, to so very dear a lady. And when we remember the amiable looks and words between them that we have seen, and the great friendship she professed for him before she crossed the sea, and the loving letters which she has lately sent him, which he has shown to us, we have no power to believe that our consort can, of herself, credit such things of him; we cannot, in any way, believe it of him, who, after our own person, is the man, of all our realm, who would most wish to do her honour, and has always shown good sincerity to you. We pray you, dearest brother, not to give credence to any one who would make you otherwise suppose, but to put your faith in those who have always borne true witness to you in other things, and who have the best reason to know the truth of this matter. Wherefore we beseech you, dearest brother, both for your honour and ours, but more especially for that of our said consort, that you would compel her to return to us with all speed; for, certes, we have been ill at ease for the want of her company, in which we have much delight; and if our surety and safe conduct is not enough, then let her come to us, on the pledge of *your* good faith for us.

"We also entreat you, dearly beloved brother, that you would be pleased to deliver up to us Edward, our beloved eldest son, your nephew; and that of your love and affection to him you would render to him the lands of the duchy,[1] that he be not disinherited, which we cannot suppose you wish. Dearly beloved brother, we pray you to suffer him to come to us with all speed, for we have often sent for him, and we greatly wish to see him and to speak with him, and every day we long for his return.

"And, dearest brother, at this time the honourable father in God, Walter,

1 Aquitaine, for which the young prince had gone to Paris to do his homage to Charles.

bishop of Exeter, has returned to us, having certified to us that his person was in peril from some of our banished enemies, and we, having great need of his counsel, enjoined him on his faith and allegiance to return forthwith, leaving all other matters in the best way he could. We pray you, therefore, to excuse the sudden departure of the said bishop for the cause before said.

"Given at Westminster, the first day of December (1325)."

Edward's letter to Isabella herself on the same subject is exceedingly temperate, but evidently written under a deep sense of injury, and with a formal courtesy, very different from the friendly and confidential style in which he addresses her brother, as our readers will perceive.

"Lady;

"Oftentimes have we sent to you, both before and after the homage, of our great desire to have you with us, and of our grief of heart at your long absence; and as we understand that you do us great mischief by this, we will that you come to us with all speed, and without further excuses.

"Before the homage [1] was performed, you made the advancement of that business an excuse, and now that we have sent by the honourable father, the bishop of Winchester, our safe conduct to you, 'you will not come for the fear and doubt of Hugh le Despencer!' whereat we cannot marvel too much, when we recall your flattering deportment towards each other in our presence, so amicable and sweet was your deportment, with special assurances and looks, and other tokens of the firmest friendship, and also, since then, your very especial letters to him of late date, which he has shown to us.

"And certes, lady, we know for truth, and so know you, that he has always procured from us all the honour he could for you, nor to you ha either evil or villany been done since you entered into our companionship; unless, peradventure, as you may yourself remember, once, when we had cause to give you secretly some words of reproof for your pride, but without other harshness: and, doubtless, both God and the law of our holy church require you to honour us, and for nothing earthly to trespass against our commandments, or to forsake our company. And we are much displeased, now the homage has been made to our dearest brother, the king of France, and we have such fair prospect of amity, that you, whom we sent to make the peace, should be the cause (which God forefend) of increasing the breach between us by things which are feigned and contrary to the truth. Wherefore we charge you as urgently as we can, that ceasing from all pretences, delays, and false excuses,[2] you come to us with all the haste you can.

[1] Which was performed by Prince Edward their son.

[2] *Scusacion* is the word used in the original.

Our said bishop has reported to us, that our brother, the king of France, told you in his presence, 'that, by the tenor of your safe conduct, you would not be delayed or molested in coming to us as a wife should to her lord.' And as to your expenses, when it shall be that you will come to us as a wife should to her lord, we will provide that there shall be no deficiency in aught that is pertaining to you, and that you be not in any way dishonoured by us. Also, we require of you that our dear son Edward return to us with all possible speed, for we much desire to see him and to speak with him."[1]

King Edward concludes this letter with repeating the same observations to the queen on the sudden return of the bishop of Exeter, which our readers have seen in his letter to her brother, the king of France. Both letters are dated on the same day, December 1, 1326.

His letter to the prince of Wales, written on the next day, is as follows:—

"VERY DEAR SON,

"As you are young and of tender age, we remind you of that which we charged and commanded you at your departure from Dover, and you answered then, as we know with good will, 'that you would not trespass or disobey any of our injunctions in any point for any one.' And, since that your homage has been received by our dearest brother, the king of France, your uncle, be pleased to take your leave of him, and return to us with all speed in company with your mother, if so be that she will come quickly, and if she will not come, then come *you* without farther delay, for we have great desire to see you, and to speak with you; therefore stay not for your mother, nor for any one else, on our blessing.

"Given at Westminster, the 2nd day of December."

It is matter of regret that the replies to these most interesting letters have not been preserved among our national records; but the substance of them may be gathered from the following urgent and touching appeals from the injured husband of Isabella to the prince their son, and to her husband the king of France.

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iv. From the Close Rolls, 19th Ed., 2nd.

Second letter from King Edward II. to his son Edward prince of Wales.[1]

"EDWARD, FAIR SON,

"We understand by your letters written in reply to ours, that you remember well the charge we gave you; among other things, not to contract marriage, nor to suffer it to be contracted for you, without our knowledge and consent; and also that at your departure from Dover you said, 'that it should be your pleasure to obey our commandments, as far as you could, all your days.'"

"Fair son, if thus you have done, you have done wisely and well, and according to your duty, so as to have grace of God of us and all men; and if not, then you cannot avoid the wrath of God, the reproach of men, and our great indignation, for we charged you so lately and so strictly that you should remember well these things, and that you should by no means marry, nor suffer yourself to be married without our previous consent and advice; for no other thing that you could do would occasion greater injury and pain of heart to us. And inasmuch as it seems you say 'you cannot return to us because of your mother,' it causes us great uneasines of heart that you cannot be allowed by her to do that which is your natural duty, and which not doing will lead to much mischief.

"Fair son, you know how dearly she would have been loved and cherished, if she had timely come according to her duty to her lord. We have knowledge of much of her evil doings, to our sorrow; how that she devises pretences for absenting herself from us, on account of our dear and faithful nephew[2] H. le Despencer, who has always so well and loyally served us, while you and all the world have seen that she openly, notoriously, and knowing it to be contrary to her duty, and against the welfare of our crown, has attracted to herself, and retains in her company, the Mortimer, our traitor, and mortal foe, proved, attainted, and adjudged, and him she accompanies in the house and abroad in despite of us, of our crown, and the right ordering of the realm—him the malefactor,[3] whom our beloved brother the king of France at our request banished from his dominions as our enemy! And worse than this she has done, *if* worse than *this* can be, in allowing you to consort with our said enemy, making him your counsellor, and you openly to herd and associate with him in the sight of all the world, doing so great a villany and dishonour both to yourself and us, to the prejudice of our crown, and of the laws and customs of our realm, which *you* are supremely bound to hold, preserve, and maintain.

"Wherefore, fair son, desist you from a part which is so shameful, and may be to you perilous and injurious in too many ways. We are not

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. i. p. 182.

[2] King Edward bestows this appellation on the favourite, because he was the husband of his great niece the heiress of Gloucester.

[3] *Malveys* is the word used in the original French by the incensed king.

pleased with you, and neither for your mother, nor for any other, ought you to displease us. We charge you by the faith, love, and allegiance which you owe us, and on our blessing that you come to us without opposition, delay, or any further excuse; for your mother has written to us, 'that if you wish to return to us she will not prevent it,' and we do not understand that your uncle the king detains you against the form of your safe conduct. In no manner, then, either for your mother, or to go to the duchy, nor for any other cause, delay to come to us. Our commands are for your good, and for your honour, by the help of God. Come quickly, then, without further excuse, if you would have our blessing, and avoid our reproach and indignation.

"It is our wish to order all things for the good of the duchy, and our other dominions, for our mutual honour and benefit.

"If John of Bretagne, and John de Cromwell, will come in your company, they will do their duty.

"Fair son, trespass not against our commands, for we hear much that you have done of things you ought not.

"Given at Lichfield, the 18th day of March." [1]

From the tenor of this letter it is evident that Edward had been informed of his queen's clandestine and certainly most unconstitutional proceedings with regard to contracting their son, the youthful heir of England, in marriage, without either his knowledge or the consent of parliament. This was the more annoying to the king, because he was himself negotiating a double marriage between the prince of Wales and the infanta Eleanora of Arragon, and the young king of Arragon with his eldest daughter the Princess Eleanor.[2] King Edward had been treating for those alliances with the regency of Arragon long before the departure of Queen Isabella to the court of France, and matters were so far advanced that application had been made to the pope for a dispensation,[3] when the whole scheme was traversed by Isabella's contract for her son's marriage with a daughter of the count of Hainault.

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, from the Close Rolls of the 19th year of Edward II.
[2] See Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iv. [3] Ibid.

It seems that the bride's portion, which was paid in advance, was required by Isabella to support herself against her unhappy lord, to whom, however she continued to hold out unmeaning professions of her dutiful inclinations, as we perceive from his reply to one of the letters addressed to him by her brother the king of France:—

"DEAREST BROTHER,

"We have considered well your letters, in which you signify that you have spoken with good diligence to your sister, touching the things on which we have replied to you, and that she has told you, 'that it is her desire to be with us, and in our company, as a good wife ought to be in that of her lord, and that the friendship between her and our dear and faithful nephew H. le Despencer was but feigned on her part, because she saw it was expedient for her support in past time, and to secure herself from worse treatment.' Certes, dearest brother, if she loved us, she would desire to be in our company, as she has said. She who ought to be the mediatress between us of entire and lasting peace should not be the cause of stirring up fresh strife, as she has done when she was sent to nourish peace and love between you and us, which we intended in all good faith when we sent her to you; but the thought of her heart was to devise that pretence for withdrawing from us. We have already shown you that what she has told you is, saving your reverence, not the truth, for never (so much as she has done against us) has she received either evil or villany from us or from any other. Neither has she had any occasion 'for feints to support herself in times passed, nor to escape from worse,'[2] for never in the slightest instance has evil been done to her by him;[3] and since she has departed from us and come to you, what has compelled her to send to our dear and trusty nephew, H. le Despencer, letters of such great and especial amity as she has been pleased to do from time to time?

"But truly, dearest brother, it must be as apparent to you as to us and to all men, that she does not love us as she ought to love her lord; and the cause why she has spoken falsehoods of our nephew, and withdrawn herself from us, proceeds, according to my thoughts, from a disordered will, when she so openly, notoriously, and knowingly, against her duty," &c. &c.

Here King Edward passionately repeats the same

[1] Rymer's Fœdera.

[2] These sentences marked by commas are evidently quotations from Isabella's representations.

[3] Hugh le Despencer.

observations respecting Isabella's shameless intimacy with Mortimer, of which he had made use in the preceding letter to the prince his son, and then proceeds:

"If you wished her well, dearest brother, you would chastise her for this misconduct, and make her demean herself as she ought, for the honour of all those to whom she belongs. Then our son, dearest brother, is made also by his mother, your sister, the companion of our said traitor and foe, who is his councillor in delaying his return in our despite."

Some requests touching Guienne follow, and after repeating his entreaties for his son to be restored to him, King Edward concludes his letter in the following words:

"And that you will be pleased to do these things, dearest brother, for the sake of God, reason, good faith, and natural fraternity, without paying regard to the light pleasaunce of a woman, is our desire.

"Given at Lichfield, the 18th of March."

After this letter Charles le Bel is said to have looked very coolly on his sister, and even to have urged her to return with her son to her royal husband; but Isabella had another game in view, and had gone too far, she felt, to recede, without incurring in reality the perils which she had before pretended to dread. Her party in England had now, through the malignant activity of her especial agent Adam Orleton, bishop of Hereford, become so strong, that about this time she received a deputation from the confederate barons, assuring her "that if she could only raise a thousand men, and would come with the prince to England at the head of that force, they would place him on the throne to govern by her guidance."[1]

The queen had already been very active in securing the assistance of many enterprising young nobles, and soldiers of fortune, who were, by her persuasive words and fair promises,[2] ready to attend her; but though

[1] Walsingham. Le Moor. Froissart. [2] Froissart.

she had conducted her preparations with great secrecy, the Despencers had information of her proceedings, and if we may trust the assertions of Froissart they circumvented her by the skilful distribution of counter bribes among the ministers of the king of France; nay he even goes so far as to say that the Despencers addressed their golden arguments to King Charles himself so successfully, that he withdrew his countenance from his royal sister, and forbade any person, under pain of punishment, to aid or assist her in her projected invasion of England.[1] Less prejudiced historians, however, attribute the marked change of King Charles with regard to his sister's cause to the scandal which her undisguised passion for Mortimer had caused in his court.

Some impression, too, might have been made on the mind of Isabella's brother by the touching appeal which her luckless husband about this time addressed to him in the following letter:

MOST DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER,

"We would wish you to remember, that we have at different times signified to you by our letters, how improperly your sister our wife has conducted herself in withdrawing from us, and refusing to return at our command, while she so notoriously has attached to her company, and consorts with, our traitor and mortal enemy the Mortimer, and our other enemies there, and also makes Edward our son and heir an adherent of the same our enemies to our great shame, and that of every one of her blood; and if you wish her well, you ought, both for your own honour and ours, to have these things duly redressed."

Then, after reiterating his earnest intreaties to his royal brother-in-law for the restoration of the prince his son, "who is," he observes, "of too tender an age to guide and govern himself, and therefore ought to be under his paternal care,"—King Edward implores him

[1] Froissart's Chronicles.

to put his son in possession of the before-named duchy, for which he had performed the homage as stipulated, and that without dwelling too particularly on the wording of the covenant, (which had evidently been designedly mystified by the contrivance of Isabella,) he adds:

"But these things are as nothing, it is the herding of our said wife and son, with our traitors and mortal enemies that notoriously continues; insomuch, that the said traitor, the Mortimer, was carried in the train of our said son publicly to Paris, at the solemnity of the coronation of our very dear sister your wife, the queen of France, at the Pentecost just passed, to our great shame, and in despite of us."

"Wherefore, dearest brother, we pray you, as earnestly as we can by the rights and blessings of peace, and the entire friendship that subsists between us, that you will of your benevolence effectually attend to our supreme desire, that we be not thus dishonoured, and our son disinherited, which we cannot suppose you wish.

"Dearest brother, you ought to feel for us, and so should all men of our estate, for much we are, and much we have been, grieved at the shameful despites and great injury which we have so long endured. Nay, verily, brother-in-law, but we cannot bear it longer.[1] The Holy Spirit have charge of you."

At the same time, in the month of June 1326, King Edward made a last fruitless attempt to prevail on the prince his son to withdraw himself from the evil counsels and contumacious companions of the queen his mother, and to return to him. This letter, like the preceding correspondence, affords indubitable evidence how accurately the unfortunate husband of Isabella was informed of her proceedings with regard to Mortimer.

EDWARD FAIR SON,

"We have seen by your letters lately written to us, that you well remember the charges we enjoined you on your departure from Dover, and that you have not transgressed our commands in any point that was in your power to avoid. But to us it appears that you have not humbly obeyed our commands as a good son ought his father, since you have not returned

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, from the Close Rolls of the 19th year of Edward II.

to us to be under government, as we have enjoined you by our other letters, on our blessing, but have notoriously held companionship, and your mother also, with Mortimer, our traitor and mortal enemy, who, in company with your mother and others, was publicly carried to Paris in your train, to the solemnity of the coronation, at Pentecost just past, in signal despite of us, and to the great dishonour both of us and you; for truly he is neither a meet companion for your mother, nor for you, and we hold that much evil to the country will come of it.

"Also we understand that you, through counsel, which is contrary both to our interest and yours, have proceeded to make divers alterations, injunctions, and ordinances without our advice, and contrary to our orders, in the duchy of Guienne, which we have given you; but you ought to remember the conditions of the gift, and your reply when it was conferred upon you at Dover. These things are inconvenient, and must be most injurious. Therefore we command and charge you, on the faith and love you ought to bear us, and on our blessing, that you show yourself our dear and well-beloved son as you have aforetime done, and, ceasing from all excuses of your mother, or any like those that you have just written, you come to us here with all haste, that we may ordain for you and your state as honourably as you can desire. By right and reason you ought to have no other governor than us, neither should you wish to have.

"Also, fair son, we charge you by no means to marry till you return to us, nor without our advice and consent, nor for any cause either go to the duchy, or elsewhere, against our will and command.

"P.S. Edward, fair son, you are of tender age: take our commandments tenderly to heart, and so rule your conduct with humility, as you would escape our reproach, our grief and indignation, and advance your own interest and honour. Believe no counsel that is contrary to the will of your father, as the wise king Solomon instructs you. Understand, certainly, that if you now act contrary to our counsel, and continue in wilful disobedience, you will feel it all the days of your life, and all other sons will take example to be disobedient to their lords and fathers."[1]

The evil influence of Isabella prevented the paternal remonstrances of the royal writer from having any proper effect on the mind of her son, and it should seem that she succeeded in persuading him that she was the object of the most barbarous persecution, both of the Despencers and the king her husband.

King Edward sent copies of these letters to the pope,[2] and entreated his interference so effectually,

[1] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iv. From the Close Rolls of 19th Edward II.

[2] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iv. From the Close Rolls of 19th of Edward II. Froissart. Walsingham.

that the pontiff addressed his censures to Charles le Bel, on his detention of the queen of England from her royal consort, and charged him, under the penalty of excommunication, to dismiss both Isabella and her son from his dominions.

"When King Charles had read these letters," says Froissart, "he was greatly disturbed, and ordered his sister to be made acquainted with their contents, for he had held no conversation with her for a long time, and commanded her to leave his kingdom immediately, or he would make her leave it with shame."[1]

"When the queen received this angry and contemptuous message from her brother, she was greatly troubled;" for the French barons had already withdrawn themselves, either as Froissart states, by the king's commands, or through disgust at the infatuation of her conduct with regard to Mortimer, "and she had no adviser left but her dear cousin, Robert d'Artois," and he could only assist her secretly, since the king her brother had not only said, but sworn, "that whoever should speak in behalf of his sister, the queen of England, should forfeit his lands, and be banished the realm." Robert of Artois had also discovered that a plan was in agitation for delivering Queen Isabella, the prince her son, the earl of Kent, and Sir Roger Mortimer, to King Edward.[2]

"Sir Robert Artois came in the middle of the night to warn Isabella of the peril in which she stood. The queen was struck with consternation at this intelligence, and Artois strongly urged her to enter the imperial territories, and to throw herself upon the protection of some of the independent German princes,

[1] Froissart. [2] Ibid.

especially William Earl of Hainault, whose consort was Isabella's first cousin.

"The queen ordered her baggage to be made ready as secretly as possible, and having *paid everything*, (a point of honesty recorded to her credit by Froissart,) she quitted Paris, accompanied by her son, the earl of Kent, and all her company. After some days she came into the country of Cambray. When she found that she was in the territories of the empire, she was more at her ease; she entered Ostrevant in Hainault, and lodged at the house of a poor knight, called Sir Eustace d'Ambreticourt,[1] who received her with great pleasure, and entertained her in the best manner he could, insomuch that afterwards the queen of England and her son invited the knight, his wife, and all his children, to England, and advanced their fortunes in various ways."

"The arrival of the queen of England was soon known in the house of the good earl of Hainault, who was then at Valenciennes; Sir John, his brother, was likewise informed of the hour when she alighted at the house of the lord of Ambreticourt. This Sir John being at that time very young, and panting for glory, like a knight errant mounted his horse, and, accompanied by a few persons, set out from Valenciennes, and arrived in the evening to pay the queen every respect and honour."

The queen was at this time very dejected, and made a lamentable complaint to him of all her griefs; which affected Sir John so much that he mixed his tears with hers, and said:

"Lady, see here your knight, who will not fail to die for you, though every one else should forsake you;

[1] Froissart.

therefore I will do everything in my power to conduct you safely to England with your son, and to restore you to your rank, with the assistance of your friends in those parts; and I, and all those whom I can influence, will risk our lives on the adventure for your sake, and we shall have a sufficient armed force, if it please God, without fearing any danger from the king of France.

The queen, who was sitting down and S.r John standing before her, would have cast herself at his feet; but the gallant Sir John, rising up quickly, caught her in his arms, and said,

"God forbid that the queen of England should do such a thing! Madam, be of good comfort to yourself and company, for I will keep my promise—and you shall come and see my brother and the countess his wife, and all their fine children, who will be rejoiced to see you, for I have heard them say so."[1]

The queen answered: "Sir, I find in you more kindness and comfort than in all the world besides; and I give you five hundred thousand thanks for all you have promised me with so much courtesy. I and my son shall be for ever bound unto you, and we will put the kingdom of England under your management, as in justice it ought to be."[2]

When Isabella quitted the castle of Ambreticourt she told Sir Eustace and his lady she trusted a time would come when she and her son would remember their courtesy. She then mounted her horse and set off with her train accompanied by Sir John, who with joy and respect conducted her to Valenciennes. Many of the citizens of the town came forth to meet her, and received her with great humility. She was thus con-

[1] Froissart. [2] Ibid.

ducted to William Count of Hainault, who, as well as the countess, received her very graciously. Many great feasts were given on this occasion, as no one knew better than the countess how to do the honours of her house.[1]

Queen Isabella remained at Valenciennes during eight days, with the good count and his countess, Joanna of Valois. Then the queen made every preparation for her departure, and John of Hainault wrote very affectionate letters to certain knights-companions in whom he put great confidence, from Brabant and Bohemia; "beseeching them by all the friendship there was between them to arm in the cause of the distressed queen of England."[2]

All the expedition gathered at Dort. "Then the queen of England took leave of the count of Hainault and his good countess, thanking them much for the honourable entertainment they had shown her, and she kissed them at her departure. Sir John with great difficulty obtained his lord and brother's permission to accompany Isabella. When he took leave of him he said,—"My dear lord and brother, I am young, and believe that God has inspired me with a desire of this enterprise for my advancement. I also believe for certain, that this lady and her son have been driven from their kingdom wrongfully. If it is for the glory of God to comfort the afflicted, how much more is it to help and succour one who is daughter of a king, descended from royal lineage, and to whose blood we ourselves are related! I will renounce everything here, and go and take up the cross in heathendom beyond seas, if this good lady leaves us without comfort

[1] Froissart. [2] Ibid.

and aid. But if you will grant me a willing leave, I shall do well, and accomplish my purpose."

When the good earl heard his brother, and perceived the great desire he had for this expedition, he said;

"Dear brother, God forbid there should be any hinderance to your wish, therefore I give you leave in the name of God!"[1] He then kissed him, and squeezed his hand, in sign of great affection.

The queen, her son, and suite set off, accompanied by Sir John, and went that night to Mons, where they slept. They embarked at Dort, according to Froissart, whose account of their voyage and landing on the *terra incognita* between Orwell and Harwich is so marvellous, that we have in preference translated the authentic and circumstantial details of the chronicle of Flanders.

"The fleet was tossed with a great tempest, but made the port about noon, when the queen being got safely on shore, her knights and attendants made her a house with four carpets, open in the front, where they kindled her a great fire of the pieces of wreck, some of their ships having been beaten to pieces in the tempest; meantime the Flemish sailors got on shore before midnight all the horses and arms, and then the ships that had survived the storm sailed, (the wind being favourable) to the opposite coast. But the queen, finding herself ill at ease on the stormy sea-beach that night, marched at day-break, with banners displayed, towards the next country town, where she found all the houses amply and well furnished with provisions, but all the people fled."

The advanced guard mean time spread themselves

[1] Froissart.

over the country, and seized all the cattle and food they could get, and the owners followed them crying bitterly into the presence of the queen, who asked them "what was the fair value of the goods," and when they named the price, she paid them all liberally in ready money. The people were so pleased with this conduct that they supplied her well with provisions."

"Queen Isabella arrived at Harwich on the 25th of September 1326,[1] on the domain of Thomas of Brotherton, the king's brother, who was the first who came to greet her on her landing.[2] Then she was met and welcomed by her uncle Henry of Lancaster, and many other barons and knights, and almost all the bishops, notwithstanding the king's proclamation, commanding all men to avoid the queen's armament at its first landing."

Her force consisted of two thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven soldiers well appointed, commanded by Lord John of Hainault, brother to her ally the sovereign of Hainault. Roger Mortimer commanded her English partisans.

The historian of Harwich declares that it was wonderful how the common people flocked to her. Every generous feeling in the English character had been worked upon by her emissaries, who had disseminated inflammatory tales of the persecutions she had endured from the king her husband, and his barbarous ministers. It was asserted that she had been driven into a

[1] History of Harwich by Silas Taylor.

[2] Speaking of Plantagenet earl of Norfolk, Drayton, with his minute adherence to facts, says:

> "And being earl marshal great upon the coast,
> With bells and bonfires welcomes her on shore,
> And by his office gathering up an host,
> Showed the great spleen that he to Edward bore."

foreign land by plots against her life, and that she was the most oppressed of queens—the most injured of wives.

So blinding was the excitement which at this crisis pervaded all classes of the people, that the glaring falsehood of her statements as to the cause of her quitting England was forgotten; the improprieties of her conduct, which had excited the disgust of her own countrymen, and caused the king her brother to expel her with contempt from his dominions, were regarded as the base calumnies of the Despencers. The facts that she came attended by her paramour, an outlawed traitor, at the head of a band of foreign mercenaries, to raise the standard of revolt against her husband, and sovereign, having abused her maternal influence over the mind of the youthful heir of England, to draw him into a paricidal rebellion, excited no feeling of moral or religious reprobation in the nation.

Every Plantagenet in England espoused her cause; but it is to be observed that the king's younger brothers by the half blood, Thomas of Brotherton and the earl of Kent, were Isabella's first cousins, being the sons of her aunt Marguerite of France, and that Henry of Lancaster was her uncle. The connexion of these princes with the blood-royal of France had ever led them to make common cause with Queen Isabella. By them and their party she was always treated as a person of more importance than the king her husband.

When the alarming intelligence of the landing of the queen's armament reached the king, he was paralyzed, and instead of taking measures for defence, he sat down to write pathetic letters to the pope and the king of France, entreating their succour or interference.

He then issued a proclamation proscribing the persons of all those who had taken arms against him, with the exception of Queen Isabella, the prince her son, and his brother the earl of Kent. It is dated Sept, 28, 1326, in it he offers a thousand pounds for the head of the arch-traitor, Roger Mortimer.

The queen; however, not to be outdone, immediately published a reward of double that sum for the head of the younger Despencer, in her manifesto from Wallingford, wherein she sets forth that her motives in coming are to deliver the kingdom from the misleaders of the king.[1]

The next attack on the king was from the pulpit at Oxford, where Adam Orleton, bishop of Hereford, having called the University together, in the presence of the queen, the prince of Wales, Roger Mortimer, and their followers, preached a sermon from the following text: "My head, my head acheth;" (2 Kings iv. 19;) in which, after explaining the queen's motive for appearing in arms, he with unpriestly ferocity concluded with this observation: "When the head of a kingdom becometh sick and diseased, it must of necessity be taken off, without useless attempts to administer any other remedy."[2]

The delivery of this murderous doctrine in the presence of the wife and son of the devoted sovereign ought to have filled every bosom with horror and indignation; but such is the blindness of party rage, that its only effect was to increase the madness of the people against their unhappy king.

That misjudging prince, after committing the custody of the Tower and the care of his second son John

[1] Fœdera. [2] De la Moor.

of Eltham to the young Lady Despencer, his niece, and the guardianship of the city of London to the faithful Stapleton, bishop of Exeter, left the metropolis, attended by the two Despencers, the earls of Arundel and Hereford, his chancellor Baldock, bishop of Norwich, and a few others of his adherents, and fled to Bristol, with the intent of taking refuge in Ireland.[1]

The departure of the king was the signal for a general rising of the Londoners, in which the bishop of Exeter immediately fell a sacrifice to the fury of the partisans of the queen and Mortimer. The head of this honest prelate was cut off and presented to the queen at Gloucester as an acceptable offering. "Six weeks afterwards," says Thynne, "the queen, forgetting all discourtesies, did like a woman desirous to show that his death happened without her liking, and also that she reverenced his calling, command his corpse to be removed from the place of its first dishonourable interment and a heap of rubbish, and caused it to be buried in his own cathedral."[2] The lady Despencer intimidated by this murder surrendered the Tower to the mob, who proclaimed Prince John the custos of the city, and in the queen's name liberated the prisoners in all the gaols.

"The queen and all her company," says Froissart, "the lords of Hainault and their suite, took the shortest road for Bristol, and in every town through which they passed were entertained with every mark of distinction. Their forces augmented daily until they arrived at Bristol, which they besieged. The king and the younger Hugh Despencer shut themselves up in the

1 Walsingham. De la Moor.

2 Thynne's MSS. Lives of the Lord Treasurers. Collection of Sir T. Phillipps.

castle; old Sir Hugh and the earl of Arundel remained in the town, but these the citizens delivered up soon after to the queen, who entered Bristol accompanied by Sir John Hainault, with all her barons, knights, and squires. Sir Hugh Despencer, the elder, and the earl of Arundel, were delivered to the queen, that she might do what she pleased with them."

The children of the queen were also brought to her, John of Eltham and her two daughters. As she had not seen them for a long time, this gave her great joy as well as all her party."

"The king, and the younger Despencer, shut up in the castle, were much grieved at what passed, seeing the whole country turned to the queen's party.

"The queen then ordered old Sir Hugh and the earl of Arundel to be brought before her son and the barons assembled, and told them "that she should see that law and justice were executed on them according to their deeds." Sir Hugh replied,

"'Ah, madam, God grant us an upright judge and a just sentence; and that if we cannot find it in this world, we may find it in another.'"

The gallant old knight, when he made this reply, was ninety. He was speedily sentenced and executed in sight of his son and the king, who were still safe in the castle of Bristol. This execution took place in October, on St. Denis's day, 1326.

"It seems," says Froissart, "that the king and the younger Sir Hugh, intimidated by this execution, endeavoured to escape to the Welsh shore in a boat which they had behind the castle; but after tossing about some days, and striving in vain against the contrary winds, which drove them repeatedly back within a mile of the castle from whence they were

trying to escape, Sir Hugh Beaumont, observing the efforts of this unfortunate bark, rowed out with a strong force in his barge to see who was in it. The king's exhausted boatmen were soon overtaken, and the consequence was, that the royal fugitive and his hapless favourite were brought back to Bristol, and delivered to the queen as her prisoners." According to other historians, Edward fled to Wales and took refuge among the monks of Neath, but his retreat was betrayed by Sir Thomas Blunt, the steward of his household.

Now the evil nature of Isabella of France blazed out in full view. Hitherto her beauty, her eloquence, and her complaints, had won all hearts towards her cause; but the touchstone of prosperity showed her natural character.

"The queen and all the army set out for London. Sir Thomas Wager, the marshal of the queen's army, caused Sir Hugh Despencer to be fastened on the poorest and smallest horse he could find, clothed with a tabard, such as he was accustomed to wear, that is, with his arms, and the arms of Clare of Gloucester, in right of his wife, emblazoned on his surcoat, or dress of state. Thus was he led in derision, in the suite of the queen, through all the towns they passed, where he was announced by trumpets and cymbals, by way of greater mockery, till they reached Hereford, where she and her suite were joyfully and respectfully received, and where the feast of All Saints was celebrated by them with great solemnity.

The unfortunate Hugh Despencer would eat no food from the moment he was taken prisoner, and becoming very faint, Isabella had him tried at Hereford, lest he should die before he reached London. Being

nearly insensible when brought to trial, his diabolical persecutors had him crowned with nettles.[1] But he gave few signs of life. His miseries were ended by a death, accompanied with too many circumstances of horror and cruelty to be more than alluded to here. He was executed at Hereford in the stronghold of the power of Mortimer; some historians say that the queen was present at his execution.

The earl of Arundel, and two gentlemen named Daniel and Micheldene, were beheaded previously at Hereford, to gratify the vindictive feelings of Mortimer, who cherished an especial animosity against them. Baldock, the chancellor, though protected by his priestly vocation as bishop of Norwich from the axe and the halter, derived little benefit from his clergy, since he was consigned to the tender mercies of Adam Orleton, through whose contrivance he was attacked by the London mob with such sanguinary fury, that he died of the injuries he received on his way to Newgate.[2]

Much of the cruel and perfidious spirit which characterized the conduct of Philip le Bel in his ruthless dealings with the Knights Templars may be traced in the proceedings of his daughter Isabella at this period. She was, however, the popular idol of the English just then, and, as long as the national delusion lasted, she could do no wrong.

After these executions, the queen set out for London, accompanied by her son, her doughty champion Sir John of Hainault, and her paramour Mortimer, her baronial partisans, and her foreign troops, while a

[1] Chronicle in Leland written by Sir W. Packington, treasurer to Edward the Black Prince.

[2] Walsingham. De la Moor.

motley levy of volunteers, who had accumulated on the road, followed in an almost interminable concourse. As they approached the metropolis, great crowds poured forth to welcome them; and the queen was hailed as the deliverer of the country. The citizens presented costly gifts to Isabella, also to some of her followers. We may suppose that Mortimer was not forgotten.[1]

Previously to her quitting Bristol the queen summoned a parliament in the king's name to meet at Westminster, Dec. 15th, "in which Isabella, queen consort, and Edward, son of the king, the guardian of the realm, and the lords, might treat together." This writ was tested by the prince as guardian. When, however, they had the king in their possession, it could no longer be said that he was out of the realm, and therefore a new summons was issued for the meeting of parliament at the same place, on January 7th, to treat with the king himself, *if he were present*, or *else* with the queen consort and the king's son, guardian of the realm. And this summons was tested by the king himself at Ledbury, Dec. 3.

In this memorable parliament the misdemeanors of the absent sovereign were canvassed, his deposition was decreed, and his eldest son was elected to his office, and immediately proclaimed king in Westminster Hall, by the style and title of Edward III.

When the decision of her own faction was made known to Isabella, she burst into a passion of weeping,[2] and these counterfeit tears so wrought upon the generous, unsuspicious nature of her son, that he made a

1 Rolls of Parliament. Brady, Riley, &c,
2 Walsingham.

solemn vow not to accept the offered crown of England, unless it were his royal father's pleasure voluntarily to resign it to him.

Isabella had overacted her part, and her party were a little disconcerted at the virtuous resolution of the princely boy, as they had never dreamed of making the consent of the king to his own deposition a preliminary to the inauguration of his successor; but they found nothing less would satisfy the young Edward as to the lawfulness of his title to the throne.

The unhappy king had already been compelled to resign the great seal to the delegates of his queen and parliament at Monmouth castle. Adam Orleton, the traitor bishop of Hereford, was the person employed by the queen to demand it, and as the king quiescently resigned it to him, he was deputed, with twelve other commissioners, to require the unfortunate monarch to abdicate his royal dignity, by delivering up his crown, sceptre, and the rest of the regalia, into their hands.

The commissioners proceeded on their ungracious errand to Kenilworth Castle, where the king was kept as a state prisoner, but with honourable treatment, by his noble captor, Henry of Lancaster. The pitiless traitor Orleton was the spokesman,[1] and vented the insatiable malice of his heart in a series of the bitterest insults against his fallen sovereign,[2] under the pretence of demonstrating the propriety of depriving him of a dignity, of which he had proved himself unworthy.

Edward listened to the mortifying detail of the errors of his life and government with floods of tears;[3] and when Orleton enlarged on the favour shown him by the magnates of his kingdom in choosing his son for his

[1] De la Moor. Knighton. [2] Walsingham. Rapin.
[3] De la Moor. Walsingham.

successor, instead of conferring the crown on a stranger, he meekly acknowledged it to be such, and withdrew to prepare himself for the resignation of the outward symbols of sovereignty.[1]

De la Moor, the faithful servant of Edward II., gives a pathetic account of the scene in the presence-chamber at Kenilworth Castle, where the commissioners, in the presence of Henry Plantagenet, earl of Leicester, the earl of Lancaster's eldest son, were drawn up in formal array by Orleton to renounce their homage to King Edward, and to receive his personal abdication of the royal dignity. After a long pause the unfortunate prince came forth from an inner apartment, clad in mourning weeds, or, as the chronicler expresses it, "gowned in black," the late struggle of his soul being sufficiently denoted by the sadness of his features; but on entering the presence of his obdurate subjects, he sank down in a deep swoon, and lay stretched upon the earth as one dead. The earl of Leicester and the bishop of Winchester immediately flew to his assistance, and raising him in their arms, with some tenderness supported him, and after much trouble succeeded in restoring their unhappy master to a consciousness of his misery.[2] "As piteous and heavy as this sight was," continues the chronicler, "it failed to excite the compassion of any other of the commissioners of the queen and parliament. Scarcely, indeed, had the king recovered from his indisposition, before the relentless Orleton, regardless of the agony he had inflicted, proceeded to a repetition of his cruel insults."[3]

The king gave way to a fresh paroxysm of weeping; and being much pressed for his decision, he at length

[1] De la Moor. Walsingham. [2] De la Moor.
[3] De la Moor. Walsingham.

replied that "he was aware that for his many sins he was thus punished, and therefore he besought those present to have compassion upon him in his adversity;" adding, "that, much as he grieved for having incurred the hatred of his people, he was glad that his eldest son was so gracious in their sight, and gave them thanks for choosing him to be their king."

The ceremony of abdication in this instance, it seems, consisted chiefly in the king's surrender of the crown, sceptre, orb, and other ensigns of royalty, for the use of his son and successor.

Sir William Trussel, the same judge who pronounced sentence of death on the Despencers and other adherents of the king, and whose appearance among the commissioners of the queen and parliament had probably caused the king's swoon, pronounced the renunciation of homage.

The chief faults of Edward II, appear to have been errors of judgment and levity of deportment. He is accused of having made a party on the Thames in a returned fagot-barge, and buying cabbages of the gardeners on the banks of the river to make his soup;—a harmless frolic, which might have increased the popularity of a greater sovereign. Edward was, however, too much addicted to the pleasures of the table, and is said to have given way to habits of intemperance.

From an old French MS. we find that he paid Jack of St. Alban, his painter, for dancing on the table before him and making him laugh excessively.[2] Another person he rewarded for diverting him, by his droll fashion of tumbling off his horse. The worst charge of all is,

[1] De la Moor. Walsingham. Polydore Virgil.
[2] J. P. Andrews.

that he was wont to play at chuck-farthing, or tossing up farthings for heads and tails, a very unkingly diversion certainly, and sufficient to disgust the warlike peers who had been accustomed to rally round the victorious banner of the mighty father of this grown-up baby.

Adversity appears to have had a hallowing influence on the character of Edward II.; and the following touching lines written by him in Latin during his captivity sufficiently denote that he was learned, and possessed reflective powers and a poetic imagination:—

"On my devoted head
Her bitterest showers,
All from a wintry cloud,
Stern fortune pours.
View but her favourite
Sage and discerning,
Graced with fair comeliness,
Famed for his learning;
Should she withdraw her smiles,
Each grace she banishes,
Wisdom and wit are flown,
And beauty vanishes.[1]

As soon as the commissioners returned to London with the regalia, and signified the abdication of the late sovereign to the queen and the parliament, the prince of Wales was publicly proclaimed king on the 20th of January, 1327, and Walter, archbishop of Canterbury, preached a sermon in Westminster Abbey, preparatory to the coronation, taking for his text, not any verse from scripture, but the words *Vox populi vox Dei*.

The queen judged it prudent to detain her sworn champion, Sir John de Hainault, and as many of his

[1] These lines are translated by J. P. Andrews, from the original Latin, preserved in Alderman Fabian's Chronicle.

"Damnum mihi contulit
Tempore brumali," &c. &c.

stout Flemings as he could induce to remain in her service, till after the coronation of the young king, who had completed his fifteenth year in the preceding November. He received knighthood from the sword of his cousin, the earl of Lancaster, assisted by Sir John Hainault, on this occasion.

"There was at this time," says Froissart, "a great number of countesses and noble ladies attendant on the queen Isabella. The queen gave leave to many of her household to return to their country seats, except a few nobles whom she kept with her as her council. She expressly ordered them to come back at Christmas, to a great court which she proposed to hold. When Christmas came she held her court; it was very fully attended by all the nobles and prelates of the realm, as well as by the principal officers of the great cities and towns. The young king Edward, since so fortunate in arms, was crowned with the royal diadem in Westminster on Christmas-day 1326."

The most remarkable feature at this coronation was the hypocritical demeanour of the queen-dowager Isabella, who, though she had been the principal cause of her husband's deposition, affected to weep during the whole of the ceremony.[1]

Sir John de Hainault and all his companions, noble or otherwise, were much feasted, and had many rich jewels given them at the coronation. He remained during these grand feasts, to the great satisfaction of the lords and ladies who were there, until Twelfth-day. Then the king, by the advice of the queen, gave him an annuity of 400 marks, to be held by him in fee, payable in the city of Bruges; and to the countess of Ga-

[1] Planche's Hist. of Coronations.

rennes, and some other ladies who had accompanied the queen Isabella to England, king Edward III. gave many rich jewels on their taking leave.

With a view of increasing the unpopularity of her unhappy lord, Isabella wrote to the pope on the last day of February 1326, requesting him to canonize the beheaded earl of Lancaster, whose virtues she greatly extolled.[1]

The parliament, immediately after the coronation, appointed a council of regency for the guardianship of the youthful sovereign and the realm, consisting of twelve bishops and peers. Among these were the king's two uncles, Thomas of Brotherton, earl marshal, and Edmund of Woodstock, earl of Kent, and the archbishops of Canterbury and York, &c. &c. The earl of Lancaster was appointed the president.

The queen made no remonstrance against this arrangement, but, having military power in her own hands, she seized the government, and made Roger Mortimer, whom she had caused her son to create earl of March, her prime minister, and Adam Orleton her principal counsellor.[2] This precious trio managed the affairs of the kingdom between them. After this arrangement, Isabella, hitherto the most accomplished of dissimulators, threw off the mask, and, with the sanction of a parliament made up of her creatures, appropriated to herself a dower exceeding two-thirds of the revenues of the kingdom.

The Easter following brought an invasion from the Scots, headed by the heroic king Robert Bruce, and the queen invited her champion, Sir John Hainault, to assist in the repulsion of this invasion. At Whitsun-

[1] Brady's Hist., p. 138, and Appendix, No. 64, 66. Rapin, 397.
[2] Walsingham. De la Moor.

tide Sir John and a number of mercenary troops arrived in England, but were very ill received by the populace, as the following narration will show.

"The queen held a great court on Trinity Sunday at the house of the Black Friars, but she and her son were lodged in the city, where each kept their lodgings separate, the young king with his knights, and the queen with her ladies, whose numbers were very considerable. At this court the king had five hundred knights,and dubbed fifteen new ones. The queen gave her entertainment in the dormitory, where at least sixty ladies, whom she had invited to entertain Sir John de Hainault and his suite, sat down to the table. There might be seen a numerous nobility, well served with plenty of strange dishes, so disguised that it could not be known what they were. There were also ladies most superbly dressed, who were expecting with impatience the hour of the ball, but they expected in vain. Soon after dinner the guests were suddenly alarmed by a furious fray which commenced among the grooms of the Hainault knights and the English archers, who lodged with them in the suburbs. The Hainault knights, their masters, who were at the queen's banquet, hearing the bruit of the affray, rushed to their quarters. Those that could not enter them were exposed to great danger, for the archers, to the number of three thousand, shot both at masters and grooms. It was supposed that this affray was contrived by the friends of the Despencers, in revenge for their being put to death through the advice of Sir John Hainault." This fray effectually broke up Isabella's magnificent Sunday ball at Blackfriars.

Meantime the deposed sovereign, Edward II., continued to write from his prison the most passionate

letters of entreaty to Isabella to be permitted to see her and their son; he was encouraged, perhaps, by the presents which, according to Walsingham, she occasionally sent him, of fine apparel, linen, and other trifling articles, accompanied by deceitful messages, expressing solicitude for his health and comforts, and lamenting that she was not permitted by the parliament to visit him.[1] Nothing was, however, further from the heart of Isabella than feelings of tenderness or compassion for her hapless lord; and the moment she learned that her uncle, Henry of Lancaster, had relented from his long-cherished animosity against his fallen sovereign, and was beginning to treat him with kindness and respect, she removed him from Kenilworth, and gave him into the charge of the brutal ruffians, Sir John Maltravers and Sir Thomas Gurney, who had hearts to plan and hands to execute any crime for which their agency might be required.

"Such tools the Tempter never needs
To do the savagest of deeds."

By this pair the royal victim was conducted, under a strong guard, first to Corfe Castle, and then to Bristol, where public sympathy operated so far in his favour that a project was formed by the citizens for his deliverance. When this was discovered, the associate traitors Gurney and Maltravers hurried him to Berkeley Castle, which was destined to be his last resting-place. On the road thither he was treated in the most barbarous manner by his unfeeling guards, who took fiend-like delight in augmenting his misery, by depriving him of sleep, compelling him to ride in thin

[1] Walsingham. De la Moor. Rapin. Speed.

clothing in the chilly April nights, and crowning him with hay in mockery.[1]

According to De la Moor, the queen's mandate for the murder of her royal husband was conveyed in that memorable Latin distich from the subtle pen of Adam Orleton, the master-fiend of her cabinet, which is capable, by the alteration of a comma, of being read with two directly opposite meanings.

"Edwardum occidere nolite timere, bonum est.
Edwardum occidere nolite, timere bonum est."[2]

"Edward to kill fear not, the deed is good.
Edward kill not, to fear the deed is good."

Maurice de Berkeley, the lord of the castle, on the first arrival of the unhappy Edward had treated him

[1] De la Moor adds, with great indignation, that they made him shave in the open field, bringing him cold muddy water in an old helmet, from a stagnant ditch, for that purpose. On which the unfortunate Edward passionately observed, in allusion to the bitter tears which overflowed his cheeks at this wanton cruelty, "In spite of you I shall be shaved with warm water." The excellence of Edward's constitution disappointing the systematic attempts of the queen's merciless agents, either to kill him with sorrow, or by broken rest, improper diet, and unwholesome air, they applied to Mortimer for fresh orders, it being well known that the whole body of the friars-preachers were labouring not only for his deliverance, but his restoration to royal power. The influence of this fraternity was calculated to awaken the sympathies of every village in England in favour of their deposed sovereign, whose patience and meekness under his afflictions and persecutions had already pleaded his cause in every heart not wholly dead to the tender impulses of compassion. It is supposed the sudden idea of shaving the king originated in fear of his being recognised by his partisans on his journey.

[2] A modern biographer of this prelate, with some degree of plausibility, endeavours to acquit him of this crime, on the grounds that the equivocal Latin verses quoted by so many English authors were composed, more than a century prior to this era, by an archbishop of Strimonium, with reference to Gertrude queen of Hungary, and also that Orleton was out of the kingdom at the time of Edward II.'s murder; but there is no reason why he should not have altered and adapted the lines for this purpose.

with so much courtesy and respect, that he was not only denied access to him, but deprived of all power in his own house.

On the night of the 22nd of September 1327, exactly a twelvemonth after the return of the queen to England, the murder of her unfortunate husband was perpetrated, with circumstances of the greatest horror. No outward marks of violence were perceptible on his person when the body was exposed to public view in Gloucester cathedral, but the rigid and distorted lines of the face bore evidence of the agonies he had undergone, and it is reported that his cries had been heard at a considerable distance from the castle where this barbarous regicide was committed. "Many a one woke and prayed to God for the harmless soul, which that night was departing in torture."[1]

The public indignation in that part of the country was so greatly excited against the infamous instruments of the queen and Mortimer, that they were fain to make their escape beyond seas, to avoid the vengeance of the people.[2]

The murdered king was interred without funeral pomp in Gloucester cathedral, and Isabella endeavoured, by the marriage festivities of her son and his young queen, to dissipate the general gloom which the suspicious circumstances attending the death of her un-

[1] These were the words of De la Moor, the faithful and affectionate servant of Edward II., who did justice to his master's memory in his pathetic Latin chronicle. Edward III. afterwards raised a tomb with a fine effigy to his father's memory.

[2] Three years afterwards, Gurney was seized at Burgos by king Edward III.'s orders, and beheaded at sea on his voyage to England, in order to prevent, as it has been supposed, the disgrace which must have fallen on the queen-dowager, if her share in the murder of the late king her husband had been brought to light at his trial.

happy consort had occasioned. But so universal was the feeling of disgust which the conduct of the queen and her favourite Mortimer excited, that nothing, but the despotism she had succeeded in establishing, enabled her to keep possession of her usurped power.[1]

The pacification with Scotland gave great offence to the public, because Isabella bartered for twenty thousand pounds the claims of the king of England over Scotland and Mortimer appropriated the money to his own use. By the same treaty they restored the regalia of Scotland to their rightful owners; the English were indignant that in this regalia was comprised the famous Black Cross of St. Margaret, which had been one of the crown jewels of their Anglo-Saxon kings.[2] Still more were they enraged, that without sanction of parliament the queen concluded a marriage between the princess Joanna, an infant five years old, and David Bruce, the heir of Scotland, who was about two years older. She accompanied her young daughter to Berwick, attended by Mortimer, and in their presence the royal children were married at that town, July 12, 1328.[3]

It was observed that the two brothers of the late king, Thomas of Brotherton and Edmund earl of Kent, and her own uncle the earl of Lancaster, with some other magnates, had withdrawn themselves from the national council, in utter indignation at the late proceedings of the queen, and the insolence of her favourite Mortimer. They perceived, too late, that they had been made the tools of an artful, ambitious, and vindictive woman, who, under the pretence of reforming

[1] De la Moor. Walsingham.

[2] See the Memoir of Matilda of Scotland, vol. i.

[3] The Scotch called their future queen, in derision, Joan Make-peace.

the abuses of her husband's government, had usurped the sovereign authority, and in one year committed more crimes than the late king and his unpopular ministers together had perpetrated during the twenty years of his reign.[1]

The barbarous persecutions and cruel death of their late sovereign made the princes recoil with horror at the idea of their having been in some measure accomplices in the guilt of the queen.

Mortimer had even had the audacity, when parliament met at Salisbury, October 16, to enter the town at the head of an army, and, bursting into the room where the prelates were assembled, forbade them, under peril of life and limb, to oppose his interests. He then seized on the young king and queen, and carried them off to Winchester; and, far from paying any regard to the earl of Lancaster's complaints of the infringement of his office of guardian to the king's person, he marched to Leicester, and plundered his domain there.[2]

Isabella's cruelty, her hypocrisy, and the unnatural manner in which she rendered the interests of the young king her son subservient to the aggrandisement of her ferocious paramour Mortimer, excited the indignation of all classes, and a strong party was organized, under the auspices of the Plantagenet princes, for the delivering of the nation from the tyranny of this modern Semiramis. The earl of Lancaster, who was by this time fully aware of the disposition of his vindictive kinswoman, perceived that he was intended for her next victim; on which he, with the brothers of the late king and their confederates, took up arms, and put forth a manifesto containing eight

[1] Walsingham. De la Moor. Knighton.
[2] Lingard.

articles, all alarming to the guilty queen and Mortimer, especially the first clause, which threatened inquiry into the unlawful augmentations of her dower, and the fifth, regarding the late king's death.[1] The queen-mother, aware of the impossibility of meeting such inquiries before parliament, urged the young king to attack the malcontents, assuring him the object of his uncle was to deprive him of the throne.[1]

The interference of the archbishop of Canterbury prevented another civil war, and through his exertions a hollow pacification was effected between Isabella and the princes. It was not, however, in the nature of this princess to forgive any offence that had ever been offered to her; and it is to be observed that her enmity had hitherto always proved fatal to every person who had been so unfortunate as to incur her ill will. With the wariness of a cat she now examined the characteristic qualities of the members of the royal family, whom she determined to attack separately, since she had found them too strong to engage collectively. She commenced with the earl of Kent, who had, ever since the death of the king his brother, suffered the greatest remorse for the part he had taken in the late revolution.

Isabella, being aware of his state of mind, caused it to be insinuated to him that the late sovereign, his brother, was not dead, but a prisoner within the walls of Corfe Castle. A friar, whom the earl employed to inquire into the truth of this tale, on finding that every one in that neighbourhood confidently

[1] Knighton.

[2] Lancaster was compelled to ask pardon, to submit to an enormous fine, and to enter into recognizances not to do any evil or injury to the king, the two queens, or any of their household or council, whether great or small. —Lingard.

believed that the unfortunate Edward was living under very close restraint in the castle, endeavoured to obtain access to this mysterious captive, and was shown at a distance a person sitting at table, whose air and figure greatly resembled that of the deceased king, whom, indeed, he was meant to personate. The earl of Kent, anxious to make reparation to his royal brother for the injuries he had done him, hastened to Corfe Castle, and boldly demanded of the governor to be conducted to the apartment of Sir Edward of Carnarvon, his brother. The governor did not deny that king Edward was in the castle, but protested the impossibility of permitting any one to see him. The earl then prevailed on him to take charge of a letter for his illustrious prisoner. This letter was immediately conveyed to queen Isabella, and used by her as a pretence for the arrest of the deluded prince.[1]

This was done at Winchester, where the parliament was then assembled. Earl Edmund was impeached of high treason before the peers. His own letter was the chief evidence produced against him, together with his confession, in which he acknowledged "that a certain friar-preacher of London told him he had conjured up a spirit, who assured him that his brother Edward was still alive; also that Sir Ingram Barenger brought him a letter from the Lord Zouche, requesting his assistance in the restoration of the late sovereign."[2]

For this impossible treason he was sentenced to lose his head.[3] His arraignment took place on Sunday, March 13, 1329, (Isabella's Sundays being no holidays,) and he was condemned to die on the morrow. "All that day," say the chroniclers, "the king was so beset by the queen his mother and the earl of March, that it

[1] Walsingham. [2] Public Acts. [3] Walsingham.

was impossible for him to make any efforts to preserve his uncle from the cruel fate to which he had been so unjustly doomed."[1]

This murder, which was designed by Isabella as an intimidation to the princes of the blood royal, had the effect of increasing the abhorrence in which she was now held throughout the kingdom. The queen presented Mortimer's son, Geoffrey, grants of the principal part of the estates of the royal victim.[2]

The death of Charles le Bel, without male issue, left Isabella the sole surviving child of Philip le Bel. Her eldest son, Edward III., considered that he had the best claim to the sovereignty of France. The twelve peers of France decided otherwise, and gave first the regency, and then, on the birth of the posthumous daughter of Charles le Bel, the throne, to Philip of Valois, the cousin of their late king. Edward was eager to assert his claim as the nephew of that monarch and grandson of Philip le Bel; but his mother, deceived by overtures from France for a double marriage between her daughter Eleanor and the heir of Valois, and her second son and Philip's daughter, not

[1] See the chronicler in Leland, vol. ii. p. 477, who deeply implicates Isabella in this misdeed. It inspired all people with horror. The executioner himself stole secretly away, and the earl of Kent waited on the scaffold at Winchester castle-gate from noon till five in the afternoon, because no one could be induced to perform that office. At length a condemned felon in the Marshalsea obtained his pardon on the condition of decapitating the unfortunate Plantagenet.

[2] After this execution Mortimer augmented his own retinue considerably, and affected all the pomp and consequence of princely rank. He had a hundred and eighty knights in his establishment, and never moved without a prodigious train of followers. He held so many round tables, a species of festival peculiar to his family, in imitation of king Arthur's chivalric institution, and assumed so much importance in his demeanour, that even his son Geoffrey called him, when speaking of him, "the king of folly." In fact, he exceeded Gaveston in foppery, and the Despencers in pride and cruelty.—*Dugdale.*

only prevented her son from asserting his own claims, but compelled him, sorely against his will, to acknowledge those of his rival, by performing homage to him for the provinces held of the French crown.

Edward returned from his last conference with king Philip at Amiens, out of humour with himself, and still more so with his mother. The evil odour in which Isabella's reputation was generally held both at home and abroad, though perhaps concealed from him in his own court, where he was as yet but a state puppet surrounded by her creatures, was conveyed to him through a variety of channels as soon as he was beyond the limits of her usurped authority.[1] The pride, the cruelty, and insolence of her favourite Mortimer were represented to the king by his faithful friends, with other circumstances tending to convince him of the infamy of the queen-mother's connexion with him. Edward was sensibly touched when informed of these things, and determined no longer to be a quiescent witness of his mother's dishonour.

The parliament was summoned to meet at Nottingham a fortnight after Michaelmas, and the youthful sovereign considered that it would be a favourable time for the arrest of his mother's paramour when all the barons of England were assembled round him in support of his royal authority. Edward had intended to take up his abode in Nottingham Castle, one of his own royal palaces; but Isabella, forestalling his design, had already established herself there with Mortimer and his strong guard of armed followers. Isabella had used the precaution of ordering the keys of the castle to be brought to her, and at night, for greater security, she placed them under her pillow.[2]

[1] Knighton. Walsingham. [2] Knighton. Carte.

The particulars of this most interesting crisis are best related in the words of the lively chronicler, from whom Stow has taken his graphic narrative of the arrest of the queen and her lover.

"There was a parliament, where Roger Mortimer was in such glory and honour that it was without all comparison; no man durst name him other than earl of March, and greater rout of men waited at his heels than on the king's person. He would suffer the king to rise to him, and would walk with the king equally, step by step, and cheek by cheek, never preferring the king, but would go foremost himself with his officers. He greatly rebuked the earl of Lancaster, cousin to the king, for that without his consent he appointed certain noblemen to lodgings in the town, asking, 'Who made him so bold to take up his lodgings close to the queen?" With which words, the constable, being greatly *feared,* appointed lodgings for the earl of Lancaster a full mile out of the town, where was lodged John Bohun, the earl of Hereford, lord high constable of England; by which means a great contention rose among the noblemen and the common people, who called Roger Mortimer 'the queen's paragon and the king's master, who destroys the king's blood and usurps the regal majesty.' This troubling the king's friends, William Montague and others drew to them Robert de Holland, keeper of Nottingham Castle, unto whom all secret corners of the same were known. Then, on a certain night, the king lying without the castle, both he and his friends were brought by torch-light through a secret way underground, beginning far from that castle, till they came even to the queen's chamber, which they by chance found open; they, being armed with naked swords in their hands, went forwards,

leaving the king armed without the chamber-door, lest his mother should espy him. They entered in, slew Sir Hugh Turpinton, who resisted them, and John Neville they gave a deadly wound. From thence they went to the queen-mother, whom they found with the earl of March, just ready to go to bed, and, having seized the said earl, they led him into the hall, the queen following, crying out, 'Bel fitz, ayez pitié de gentle Mortimer;' for she knew her son was there, though she saw him not. She likewise entreated Montague and his people to do no harm to the person of Mortimer, because he was a worthy knight, her dear friend and well-beloved cousin. No reply was made to her intercession, and Mortimer was hurried away, the castle locked on the queen, and all her effects sealed up. The next morning Roger Mortimer and his friends were led prisoners towards London. As soon as they appeared the populace of Nottingham and the nobles of the king's party set up a tremendou shout, the earl of Lancaster, who was at that time blind, joining in the outcry and making violent gesticulations for joy. On his arrival in London, Mortimer was for a few hours committed to the Tower, previous to his summary execution."[1]

Froissart, after relating very briefly the execution of the earl of Kent, which he attributes to the queen-mother and Mortimer, proceeds to say:—

"Not long after, great infamy fell upon the queen-mother; whether with just cause or not I am ignorant, but in this the lord Mortimer was inculpated. The king then ordered him to be arrested and brought to London, and before him and a very great number of the barons and nobles of the realm, a knight, by the

[1] Stow's Chronicle.

king's command, recited the deeds of the lord Mortimer, from a declaration he held in his hand. Every one was then asked, by way of counsel, what sentence should be given. Judgment was soon given; for each had perfect knowledge of the facts from good report and information. They replied to the king's question, that he ought to suffer the same death as Sir Hugh de Spencer the younger, which sentence had neither delay nor mercy. This was instantly carried into effect, without waiting to hear what the accused had to say in his own vindication."

Sir Simon Burford and John Deverel, who were taken in the queen's antechamber at Nottingham Castle, earnestly desired to disclose the particulars of Edward II.'s murder, but were not permitted to disburthen their consciences of their guilty knowledge, lest they should too deeply implicate the queen-mother.

Mortimer was the first person executed at Tyburn, which was then known by the name of the Elms. Burford and Deverel were executed with him. His body hung on the gallows at Tyburn two days and nights, by the especial order of the king; it was then taken down and buried in the Grey Friars' church, within Newgate, of which queen Isabella was a benefactress.[1]

Isabella was spared the ignominy of a public trial through the intercession of the pope, John XXII., who wrote to the young king exhorting him not to expose his mother's shame.[2] After this Edward attri-

[1] Knighton. De la Moor. Walsingham. Stow.

There is a precept in the Fœdera, permitting the wife and son of Mortimer to bury his body at Wigmore; but, according to Weever, the transfer was not made till the next century.

[2] Raynuld, iv. 413, quoted by Dr. Lingard, vol. iv. p. 14.

butes all her crimes to the evil influence of Mortimer, as may be seen in the royal declaration to parliament of the reasons which induced him to inflict the punishment of death on that great state criminal. In the ninth article of this posthumous arraignment it is set forth that

"The said Roger falsely and maliciously sowed discord between the father of our lord the king and the queen his companion, making her believe that if she came near her husband he would poignard her, or murder her in some other manner. Wherefore, by this cause and by other subtleties, the said queen remained absent from her said lord, to '*the great dishonour of the king and of the said queen his mother, and great damage, perhaps, of the whole nation hereafter, which God avert.*'"[1]

One of the first acts of the emancipated monarch, after the gallant achievement by which he had rendered himself master of his own realm, was to strip the queen-dowager of the unconscionable dower to which she had helped herself, and to reduce her income to 1000*l.* a year.[2] It was also judged expedient by his council to confine her to one of the royal fortresses at some distance from the metropolis, lest by her intriguing disposition she should excite fresh troubles in the realm.

Froissart, after relating the particulars of Mortimer's death, adds, "The king soon after, by the advice of his council, ordered his mother to be confined in a goodly castle, and gave her plenty of ladies to wait upon her, as well as knights and squires of honour. He made her a handsome allowance to keep and maintain the

[1] 4 Edw. III., anno 1330; Par. Rolls, p. 53.
[2] Knighton. Walsingham.

state to which she had been accustomed,[1] but forbade her ever to go out or show herself abroad, except at certain times, and when any shows were exhibited in the court of the castle.[2]

Castle Rising in Norfolk was the place where queen Isabella was destined to spend the long years of her widowhood. It had belonged to the Albinis, from whom it passed to the lords of Montalt; the widow of the last baron of that line had surrendered it to queen Isabella, during her regency, for an annuity of 400*l.* per annum.

It was a noble pile, built in 1176 by William Albini, husband to queen Adelicia.[3] It was constructed in the manner of Norwich Castle, on a bold eminence surrounded by a high bank and deep vallum. The walls were three yards thick; the keep was a large square tower, encompassed with a deep ditch and bold rampart, on which was a strong wall with three towers. Enough remains to show that Castle Rising must have been a most formidable, if not impregnable, fortress.[3]

[1] In the year 1332 Edward declares that his mother has *simply* and *spontaneously* given into his hands all the castles and estates which formed her dower; in return he has assigned his mother divers other lands and castles of the value of 2000*l.* per annum: these are chiefly in North Wales, and the castle of Haverford, with its island, mill, and appurtenance, in South Wales: the rest of the grants are mere annuities payable from various royal demesnes.—*Caley's Fœdera*, p. 835.

[2] We have here an allusion to the customs of those times, when travelling shows were the only theatrical exhibitions in use, and much encouraged by the magnates of the land. The courts of royal and baronial castles were built with galleries round them for the convenience of the family witnessing these attractive spectacles: the principal hostels were built in a similar manner for the same purpose.

[3] The keep of Castle Rising is not wholly dilapidated; the great hall is still used for court-leets. It now belongs to the Hon. Mrs. Greville Howard, one of the descendants of the great Albini, the original founder. The remains of this castle, so noted for its historical reminiscences, have been, by the fine taste of the Hon. Col. Howard, partly restored; the principal staircase has been repaired, and two rooms rendered habitable.

Froissart says, "The queen passed her time there meekly;" by which our readers are to understand that she neither devised plots nor treasons against the government of her illustrious son Edward III., and gave no further cause for public scandal.

More than one ancient historian hints that, during her long confinement, Isabella was afflicted with occasional fits of derangement.[1] It is asserted that these aberrations commenced in a violent access of madness, which seized her while the body of Mortimer hung on the gallows. Her agonies were so severe, that among the common people the report prevailed for some months that she died at the time the body was taken down. These traditions lead us to conclude that for many months the populace did notknow what had become of her. Her retired life, unconnected with conventual vows, must have strengthened the reports of her derangement, which was attributed to the horrorsof conscience. She was in her six-and-thirtieth year when her seclusion at Castle Rising commenced.

The king her son generally, when in England, visited her twice or thrice a year,[2] and never permitted any one to name her in his presence otherwise than with the greatest respect. It is to be observed that Edward's council, in regard to the petitions of certain individuals for the recovery of money due to them

[1] Sir Winston Churchill mentions this tradition as a fact; Moreri hints at it. These reports are somewhat strengthened by the extravagant salary paid to her family physician at Rising Castle. In the Fœdera is a deed securing "100*l.* per annum to Master Pontio de Courtrone, late physician to king Edward II., and now to the queen-mother Isabella; the bailiffs of Norwich are enjoined to pay him 50*l.* at Easter and at Michaelmas, as long as he lives, for his great services to the queen-mother." The document is dated 1233.

[2] Froissart.

during her government, are by him referred to the advice of queen Isabella. Her name is carefully guarded from all reproach in the rolls of parliament, which however abound in disputes relative to her regency.

There is one petition from the poor lieges of the forest of Macclesfield to king Edward, declaring that "Madame his mother holds the forest as her heritage, and yet the bailiff of Macclesfield kills her venison and destroys her wood." Isabella is not named as queen, but only as madame the king's mother; the king replies, "Let this petition be shown to the queen, that her advice may be learned thereon."

During the two first years of Isabella's residence at Castle Rising her seclusion appears most rigorous, but in 1332 from various notations the fact may be gathered that her condition was ameliorated. That year king Edward declared[1] "that, as his dearest mother had simply and spontaneously surrendered her dower into his hands, he has assigned her divers other castles and lands to the amount of 2000*l*." The same year this dower was settled she was permitted to make a pilgrimage to the Lady shrine of Walsingham, not far from her residence in Norfolk. This is evidenced from the ancient Latin records of the corporation of Lynn[2] which is in the neighbourhood of Castle Rising. There is an entry of 20*s*. for bread sent to Isabella, queen-dowager, when she came from Walsingham; also 4*l*. for a cask of wine, 3*l*. 18*s*. 6*d*. for a piece of wax, and 2*l*. for barley; also 3*s*. for the carriage of these purchases.

[1] Caley's Fœdera, 835.

[2] We have been favoured with these extracts by the Hon. Mrs. Greville Howard; they are of historical importance, since they set at rest all doubts regarding the fact of Isabella's residence at Castle Rising.

King Edward restored to his mother two years afterwards the revenues of Ponthieu and Montrieul, which were originally the gift of her murdered lord. The same year 1334 her son John of Eltham died in the bloom of life, and her daughter Eleanor was married to the duke of Gueldres;[1] Edward III., likewise visited his mother at Risings: the records of Lynn return this notice, dated 1334. "The queen Isabella sent her precept to the mayor to provide her eight carpenters to make preparations for the king's visit." In 1337 Edward III. again made some stay at Castle Rising with his mother, and Adam de Riffham of Lynn sent him a present of wine on this occasion. Once only have we evidence that Isabella visited the metropolis; this was in the twelfth year of her son's reign, when she is witness to the delivery of the great seal in its purse by king Edward to Robert de Burghersh, in the grand chamber of the bishop of Winchester's palace in Southwark.

Parliament granted to Edward III. an aid of 30,000 sacks of wool, and by a writ dated Feb. 27, 1343, the barons of the exchequer were forbidden to levy any part from the lands and manors of the queen-mother, "because it was unreasonable that a person exempt and not summoned to parliament should be burthened with aids granted by parliament."[2] The same year Isabella received another visit from the king her son; on this occasion the Lynn records note that 11*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.* was expended for meat sent to our lady queen Isabella. There is an item of 4*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* paid by the corporation for a present sent to the household of our lord the king at Thorndenes at his first

[1] See succeeding memoir.

[2] New Fœdera, vol. ii. p. 835.

coming to Rising, and 3*d.* for a horse sent by a messenger to Rising. The corporation also is answerable for twelvepence given to William of Lakenham, the falcon-bearer at Risings, 4*s.* 3*d.* given to the messengers and minstrels of queen Isabella, 2*s.* 8*d.* for wine sent to the queen's maid, and 12*d.*, a largess for the earl of Suffolk's minstrels. Barreled sturgeon was a favourite food at the queen's table, and it was certainly very costly when compared with the price of other viands. The corporation of Lynn the same year sent gifts of a pipe of wine and a barrel of sturgeon, costing together 9*l.* 12*s.* 9*d.*, to their lady queen Isabella, and moreover paid John the butcher money for conveying the said gifts to Castle Rising. They sent to her treasurer and seneschal gifts of wine that cost 40*d.*, and presented 12*s.* to John de Wyndsore and other men of the king's family when at Rising, besides 2*d.* given to a servant looking for strayed horses from the castle; likewise 40*d.* given to the steward of Rising when he came to obtain horses for the use of king Edward. A barrel of sturgeon cost as much as 2*l.* 15*s.*; the men of Lynn note that they paid 11*l.* for four barrels sent at different times as gifts to the queen at Castle Rising, and 20*s.* for two quarter-barrels of sturgeon sent by her servant Perote. The supply of herrings as gifts from the men of Lynn amounted to 6*l.*, and they sent her 103 quarters of wax at a cost of 4*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* In the eighteenth year of his reign king Edward dates several letters to the pope from Castle Rising.

A curious plan for the annoyance of king Edward was devised in the year 1348 by the French monarch, who proposed to make the queen-dowager of France and Isabella the mediatrices of a peace. They were to

meet between Calais and Boulogne; but Edward was too wise to fall into the snare of attracting public attention to the guilty and degraded mother from whom his claims to the throne of France were derived. Isabella was not suffered to take any part in the negotiation: the succeeding documents prove that the treaty was completed by the duke of Lancaster and the count of Eu.[1]

In the thirty-first year of his reign king Edward granted safe-conduct to William de Leith to wait on queen Isabella at her castle of Rising, he coming from Scotland, probably, with news from her daughter, queen Joanna, who was then very sick. This person was physician to the queen of Scotland.[2]

The next year Isabella died, August 22nd, 1358, aged sixty-three. She chose the church of the Grey Friars, where the mangled remains of her paramour Mortimer had been buried eight-and-twenty years previously, for the place of her interment; and, carrying her characteristic hypocrisy even to the grave, she was buried with the heart of her murdered husband on her breast. King Edward gave his mother a pompous funeral, and issued a precept to the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, November 20th, to cleanse the streets from dirt and all impurities, and to gravel Bishopsgate-street and Aldgate, against the coming of the body of his dearest mother queen Isabella; and directs the officers of his exchequer to disburse 9*l.* for that purpose. Isabella was interred in the choir of the Grey Friars

[1] Caley's Fœdera. Philip's letters are in French, Edward's replies in Latin.

[2] Bloomfield's Norfolk. Public Acts. Walsingham. Bloomfield. Stowe' London. Pennant. The Fœdera implies that William de Leith was employed to request queen Isabella to act as mediatrix between David and Edward, regarding the ransom of David kings of Scotland.

within Newgate, and had a fine alabaster tomb erected to her memory. She had given 62*l.* towards the building of this church. It was usual for persons buried in the Grey Friars to be wrapped in the garment of the order,[1] as a security against the attacks of the foul fiend. Queen Isabella was buried in that garment, and few stood more in need of such protection.

According to Bloomfield, local tradition asserts that queen Isabella lies buried in Castle Rising church, and that all the procession to the Grey Friars in London was but an empty pageant. In confirmation of this assertion, they point out a simple grey stone, with this inscription deeply cut:—

"ISABELLA REGINA."

Antiquarians, however, are of opinion that this stone covers the grave of one of the officers or ladies who died in her service at Castle Rising; but it is also possible that she might have bequeathed her heart to her parish church, and that this inscription may denote the spot where it was interred.

An effigy of Isabella is to be seen in the most exquisite preservation among the figures which adorn the tomb of her son John of Eltham, at Westminster Abbey. It is the third from the right hand when the examiner stands with his back to St. Edward's chapel.

[1] Perhaps Isabella in the decline of life had been admitted into the third order of St. Francis, instituted about twenty years before her death for lay penitents who were not bound by conventual vows. That she made some pretence to piety may be inferred from the following list of her relics, for which Edward III. gave a receipt to his beloved chaplain Edmund de Rammersby on behalf of his mother, the first year of her imprisonment:—Two crystal vases, containing minute bones, relics of the holy Innocents; one silver flask, containing relics of St. Sylvester; part of the side of St. Lawrence enclosed in silver; and a joint of John the Baptist's little finger.—*Caley's Fœdera*, p. 825.

The workmanship of this, and the other statues of John of Eltham's kindred, is of the most delicate kind; the easiness of the attitudes, united with minute attention to details, bespeaks an artist of superior genius. The effigies are all cast in bronze, and the row opposite to St. Edward's chapel are so well secured from the mischievous assaults of abbey depredators, by the *grille* of thick iron which parts the tomb from the passage, that they are in the same state as when they came from the hands of the artist. First stands the mother of Isabella, the queen of France and Navarre; she exactly resembles her portrait engraved in Montfaucon. Then stands the effigy of Isabella's father, Philip le Bel. Next is given Isabella herself, with a remarkably broad low head; she is very like her mother, but her features are pretty, with a laughing expression; the effigy is identified as hers by the garb of royal widowhood. She wears a crown on the top of her hood, her veil hangs on each side of her face, the widow's barb appears half covering her chin, and a sceptre is in her hand. Such was certainly her dress at Castle Rising at the death of her son prince John in 1334, and such must have been her costume during the remainder of her life; since widows in those times wore the dress of mourning all their lives, unless they found second husbands.

The effigy of her murdered lord Edward II. stands next hers; it is extremely like that on his tomb at Gloucester.

Isabella's virtuous daughter, Joanna queen of Scotland, the faithful and devoted consort of the unfortunate David Bruce, survived her mother only a few days, and was interred in the church of the Grey Friars

within Newgate.[1] Some authors assert that on the same day London witnessed the solemn pageant of the entrance of the funeral procession of the two queens—one from the eastern, and the other from the northern road—and that, entering the church by opposite doors, the royal biers met at the high altar. After a separation of thirty years, the evil mother and the holy daughter were united in the same burial rite.[2]

[1] Speed. Stow's Annals. On the site of Christ Church School.

[2] Stow's Annals. The Chronicles and the Fœdera are at variance on this head. Simon archbishop of Canterbury names queen Joanna among the serene ladies who graced the wedding of the Black Prince in 1360.—*Fœdera*, vol. vii.

PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT,

QUEEN OF EDWARD III.

CHAPTER I.

Previous attachment of Edward III. and Philippa — His sojourn at her father's court—Her blooming beauty—Demanded in marriage—Philippa arrives in London—Reception—Philippa travels to York—Married there — Her dower—Coronation—Claim on her shoes, bed, and silver basins—Birth of her eldest son—Queen nourishes him—Her portraits—Tournament—Dangerous accident — King's fury — Queen's intercession — Philippa's woollen manufacturers—Scotch war—Queen besieged in Bamborough castle —Birth of the princess royal—Of the princess Joanna—Of William of Hatfield—Death of this prince—Death of the queen's father —Poverty of the king—Pawns queen's crown—Philippa's residence in Flanders—Birth of prince Lionel— Queen's visit to Norwich — King's naval victory—Queen's fourth son—King Edward's challenge—Pacification by the queen's mother—Extreme poverty of Edward and Philippa—They steal from Ghent—Embark with their infant—In danger—Land at the Tower—King's anger—Countess of Salisbury—Order of the Garter—Philippa assists at the first chapter—Residence at Woodstock.

The happy union of the illustrious Philippa with her thrice renowned lord had been previously cemented by mutual preference, manifested in the first sweet spring-time of existence, when prince Edward took refuge with his mother, queen Isabella, at the court of Hainault.

"Count William of Hainault had at that time four daughters," says Froissart; "these were Margaret, Philippa, Joanna, and Isabel. The young prince, during his mother's residence in Hainault, paid more

court and attention to Philippa than to any of the others; the young lady also conversed with him more frequently, and sought his company oftener, than any of her sisters."

This was in 1326, when prince Edward was in his fifteenth year, and the lady Philippa a few months younger. She was a model of Flemish beauty, tall in stature, and adorned with the brilliant complexion for which the women of that country are celebrated.

A poet of her time has commemorated "her roseate hue and beauty bright;" and we can well imagine, though Philippa's matron charms became a little too exuberant in after life, that, as a sweet-tempered Flemish girl in her fifteenth year, her early bloom was surpassingly lovely.

The youthful lovers, after residing together in the palace of the count of Hainault at Valenciennes for about a fortnight, were separated. Edward embarked with his mother and John of Hainault on the dangerous expedition of invading his unfortunate father's kingdom, while his beloved was left in a state of uncertainty whether the exigencies of state and the caprice of relatives would ultimately permit to be joined the hands of those whose hearts had already elected each other.

Although a decided affection subsisted between young Edward and Philippa, it was not considered in accordance with the royal etiquette of that era for the heir of England to acknowledge that he had disposed of his heart without the consent of his parliament and council. Queen Isabella undertook the arrangement of this affair, and soon led them to decide that a daughter of the count of Hainault would be the most desirable alliance for her son; but, even as late as the fifth of

August 1327, the particular daughter of that family was not pointed out in the document requesting the dispensation of the pope; the words are, "to marry a *daughter* of that nobleman, William count of Hainault, Holland, and Zealand, and lord of Friesland;" but the name of Philippa is not once mentioned throughout the letter. Thus the lovers remained seven months after the coronation of Edward in a state of suspense.[1]

The council at last gravely decided that Adam Orleton,[2] the notorious bishop of Hereford, should visit the court of Hainault, and choose among the daughters of the count the young lady who seemed most worthy to be the queen of England. As the choice of the bishop and king fell on Philippa, the young king had certainly informed Adam Orleton, in confidence, which princess among the fair sisterhood was the elected lady of his heart. The proceedings of the bishop are thus narrated by our last rhyming chronicler, Harding.[3]

> He sent forth then to Hainault, for a wife,
> A bishop and other lords temporal.
> Among them-*self's* our lords, for high prudence,
> Of the bishop asked counsel and sentence,

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[1] The name of Philippa is not mentioned till the last instrument from Avignon was executed, dated Sept. 3, 1327.—*Fœdera*, vol. iv.

[2] Hist. Bishops of Winchester, vol. i.

[3] Harding was a Lincolnshire man, a chronicler, and an antiquarian, brought up in the family of the earl of Northumberland, so famous in the deposition of Richard II. In his youth he acted as secretary to his lord, and was present at the battle of Shrewsbury. He is, therefore, nearly a contemporary, and, as such, his authority is great. His age must have been extreme, as he lived through the whole of the reigns of the house of Lancaster; was pensioned by Henry VI. in 20*l.* per annum, and finally presented his complete history to Edward IV.: he must then have been more than ninety. He mentions five daughters of Hainault; the eldest, Sybella, who had been contracted to Edward III. in his infancy, was dead at this time.

"Which daughter of the five should be our queen?"
Who counsell'd thus with sad avisement,
"We will have her with fairest form, I wene."
To which they all accorded with one mind,
And chose Philippe that was full feminine,
As the wise bishop did determine;
But then among them-*sel's* they laughed aye;
Those lords then said, their bishop judged full sooth
The beauty of a lady.[1]

"Shortly after the young king Edward completed his sixteenth year," says Froissart, "his council sent a bishop, two knight bannerets, and two able clerks, to Sir John of Hainault, to beg of him to assist the young king of England in his suit to one of his nieces, since the young king would love her more dearly than any other lady, on his account. Sir John feasted and paid many honours to these messengers. He took them to Valenciennes, where his brother the count of Hainault gave them such sumptuous entertainment as would be tiresome to relate. He most willingly complied with their requests, if the pope and holy church had no objection. Two of the knights and the able clerks were despatched to Avignon; for without the pope's dispensation it could not be done, on account of their near relationship, for their two mothers were cousins-german. As soon as they came to Avignon, the pope and college consented most benignantly. On their return to Valenciennes immediate preparations were made for the dress and equipage of a lady who was considered worthy to be the queen of England."

[1] This passage, among many others, will prove that personal beauty was considered by our ancestors as a most desirable qualification in a queen-consort. For this reason, our memoirs are compelled by truth to dwell on the personal advantages possessed by our queens. The queens of England, down to Katherine of Arragon, seem, with few exceptions, to have been the finest women of their time.

The king, then at Nottingham, empowered the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry,[1] on the 8th of October 1327, to conclude his marriage with the noble damsel Philippa of Hainault. He likewise charges "his beloved Bartholomew de Burghersh, constable of Dover, to receive and welcome into his kingdom that noble person William count of Hainault, with the illustrious damsel Philippa his daughter, and the familiars of the said count and damsel; and he charges all and singular his nobility and people of the counties through which the count, damsel, and familiars may pass, to do them honour and give them needful aid."[2] It was necessary for the lady Philippa and her escort to travel across England to meet the royal bridegroom, who was then performing his warlike noviciate on the Scottish border, under the auspices of his mother and Mortimer, against the great Robert Bruce.

Philippa was married at Valenciennes by procuration soon after the date of this instrument. She embarked for England at Wissan, landed at Dover with all her suite, and arrived in London December 23, 1327, with a retinue and display of magnificence in accordance with the great wealth of her country. She was escorted by her uncle John of Hainault, and not by her father, as was expected. A solemn procession of the clergy introduced her into the city, and she was presented by the lord mayor and aldermen of Lon-

[1] Fœdera, vol iv. Adam Orleton, who began the negotiation, had not the honour of finishing the treaty. He had at this time fallen into disgrace with Isabella and Mortimer for accepting the rich bishopric of Winchester without the consent of the crown, and pertinaciously refusing to pay a bribe high enough to satisfy the rapacity of the queen-mother. The astute priest considered she was too much in his power to need such consideration. (See preceding memoir.)

[2] Dated at Clipstowe. Fœdera, vol. iv.

don with a service of plate worth 300*l.*, as a marriage gift — a benefaction prompted most likely by the gratitude of the citizens for a treaty of commerce established between England and the Low Countries in the preceding summer, when these nuptials were first publicly agitated. The king was still with his army in the north; and though London was in an uproarious state of rejoicing at the arrival of the young queen, the royal bride set out immediately for York to meet her lord. But there were feastings and sumptuous entertainments in London for three weeks after her landing.

The hands of Edward and Philippa were united at York, January 24, 1328. The magnificence of the espousals was heightened by the grand entry of a hundred of the principal nobility of Scotland, who had arrived in order to conclude a lasting peace with England, cemented by the marriage of the king's little sister Joanna. The parliament and royal council were likewise convened at York, and the flower of the English nobility, then in arms, were assembled round the young king and his bride.

The royal pair kept Easter at York, and after the final peace with Scotland they returned southward from Lincoln to Northampton, and finally settled, in June, at the beautiful summer palace of Woodstock, which seems the principal abiding-place of Philippa while her young husband was yet under the tutelage of Mortimer and the queen-mother.

A dead silence is kept in all the public documents regarding the amount of Philippa's portion, for reasons good, since the queen-mother had already spent it. As for the usual dower of the queens of England, the whole of its lands were possessed by the queen-

mother; but by a deed executed at Northampton,[1] May 5th, "the king," says the venerable father, Roger bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, "had promised that 15,000*l.* per annum of lands should be settled on her."

Isabella provided so well for herself and her daughter-in-law, that she left her son, the sovereign of England, nearly penniless.

After assisting at the marriage of his niece, Sir John of Hainault returned to his native country, laden with jewels and rich presents. Few of the Hainaulters who had escorted her to England stayed with queen Philippa; but among those who remained was a youth named Sir Wantelet de Mauny,[2] whose office was to carve for her.

The coronation of the young queen did not take place till more than two years after her marriage. The king, from his palace at Eltham, issued a summons, dated the 28th of February, 1330, "for his beloved and faithful Bartholomew de Burghersh to appear with his barons of the Cinque Ports, to do their customary duties at the coronation of his dearest queen Philippa, which takes place, if God be propitious, the Sunday next to the feast of St. Peter, in the cathedral of Westminster."

It took place on that day with no particular splendour, for the rapacity of Isabella and Mortimer had absorbed all the funds provided to support the dignity of the crown. But the period of their sway drew near its close. The young lion of England had already manifested signs of disdain at the ignoble restraint in which he was held.

[1] Fœdera, vol. iv.

[2] Froissart. This attendant of queen Philippa is Sir Walter Mauny, so celebrated as one of the knights of the garter.

Parliament was summoned that spring at Woodstock, whither Philippa and her royal lord had retired after the coronation. A singular document[1] is dated from thence the succeeding April, in which the king informs his treasurer "that his faithful and beloved Robert de Vere, being earl of Oxford, was hereditary chamberlain to the queens of England; at all coronations the ancestors of the earl had officiated in the same capacity; and that in consequence he claimed the bed in which the queen had slept, her shoes, and three silver basins—one in which she washed her head,[2] and two others in which she washed her hands. And the king desires that the earl may freely receive the basins and the shoes; but as for the bed, the treasurer is to pay the earl chamberlain a hundred marks as a compensation for his claim thereon."

While the young king was yet under the dominion of his unworthy mother, his consort Philippa gave birth to her first-born son, afterwards the celebrated hero Edward, surnamed the Black Prince. He first saw the light at the palace of Woodstock, June 15, 1330. The great beauty of this infant, his size, and the firm texture of his limbs, filled every one with admiration who saw him. Like that renowned queen-regent of France, Blanche of Castile, mother of St. Louis, Philippa chose to nourish her babe at her own bosom. It is well known that the portraits of the lovely young Philippa and her princely boy formed the favourite models for the Virgin and Child at that era.

In order to celebrate the birth of the heir of England,

[1] Fœdera, vol. iv. p. 426.

[2] *Face* would be more likely, but the actual word is *capitis*.

a grand tournament was proclaimed at London. Philippa and all the female nobility were invited to be present. Thirteen knights were engaged on each side, and the tournament was held in Cheapside between Wood-street and Queen-street; the highway was covered with sand to prevent the horses' feet from slipping: and a grand temporary tower was erected, made of boarding, filled with seats for the accommodation of the queen and her ladies. But scarcely had this fair company entered the tower when the scaffolding suddenly gave way, and all present fell to the ground with the queen. Though no one was injured, all were terribly frightened, and great confusion ensued. When the young king saw the peril of his wife, he flew into a tempest of rage, and vowed that the careless carpenters who had constructed the building should instantly be put to death. Whether he would thus far have stretched the prerogative of an English sovereign can never be known, for his angelic partner, scarcely recovered from the terror of her fall, threw herself on her knees before the incensed king, and so effectually pleaded for the pardon of the poor men, that Edward became pacified and forgave them.

In the decline of the year 1330 Edward III. shook off the restraints imposed upon him by his unworthy mother and her ferocious paramour. He executed justice on the great criminal Mortimer, in the summary and hasty way in which he was always inclined to act when under the impulse of passion, and at a distance from his queen. No one can wonder that he was impatient to destroy the murderer of his father and of his uncle. Still this eagerness to execute sudden vengeance under the influence of rage, whether justly or unjustly excited,

is a trait in the character of this mighty sovereign which appears in his youth, and which it is necessary to point out in order to develop the beautiful and nearly perfect character of his queen.

No sooner were the reins of government in the hands of the young king than he vigorously exerted himself for the reformation of the abuses for which the administration of Mortimer was infamous; many excellent laws were made, and others revived, to the great satisfaction of the English people. But, above all things, the king had the wisdom to provide a profitable occupation for the active energies of his people.

"Blessed be the memory of king Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault his queen, who first invented clothes," says a monastic chronicler. Start not, gentle reader; the English wore clothes before the time of this excellent queen; the grateful monk by this invocation merely means to imply that by her advice the English first manufactured *cloth*.[1]

Philippa, young as she was, well remembered the sources of prosperity which enriched her own country. She established a manufacturing colony at Norwich in the year 1335; but the first steps towards this good work were commenced so early as the 3rd of July, 1331,

[1] A more coherent notice of this great benefit to England is given by Fuller, who defines the difference between a pastoral and a manufacturing land in his usual impressive though quaint style. "The king, having married Philippa, the daughter of the earl of Hainault, began now to grow sensible of the great gain the Netherlands gat by our English wool, in memory whereof the duke of Burgundy, a century after, instituted the order of the Golden Fleece, wherein indeed the fleece was ours, but the gold theirs, so vast was their emolument by the trade of clothing. Our king therefore resolved, if possible, to reduce the trade to his own countrymen, who as yet were ignorant, as knowing no more what to do with their wool than the sheep that bore it."

within a few months of the assumption of power by the youthful king. A letter so dated from Lincoln is addressed to John Kempe of Flanders, cloth-weaver in wool, in which he is informed, "that if he will come to England with the servants and apprentices of his mystery, and with his goods and chattels, and with any dyers and fullers who may be inclined willingly to accompany him beyond seas, and exercise their mysteries in the kingdom of England, they shall have letters of protection and assistance in their settlement."[1]

Philippa occasionally visited Kempe and the rest of her colony in Norwich. Nor did she disdain to blend all the magnificence of chivalry with her patronage of the productive arts. Like a beneficent queen of the hive, she cherished and protected the working bees. At a period of her life which in common characters is considered girlhood she had enriched one of the cities of her realm by her statistical wisdom. There was wisdom likewise in the grand tournaments she held at Norwich, which might be considered as exhibitions showing the citizens how well in time of need they could be protected by a gallant nobility. These festivals displayed the defensive class and the productive class in admirable union and beneficial intercourse; while the example of the queen promoted mutual respect between them. Edward III. did not often take part in these visits to Norwich, which were generally paid by the queen while her husband spent some days

[1] Fœdera. Probably the name of John Kempe is derived from comb, (that instrument being used in his employment,) and means John of the Comb, as the old English of the verb to comb is *to kempe*. Kempe was the patriarch of the Norwich woollen manufactures.

with his guilty and miserable mother at Castle Rising in Norfolk:[1] a strong proof that he did not consider Isabella a fit companion for his Philippa.

It is likely that the establishment of the Flemish artists in England had some connexion with the visit that Jeanne of Valois, countess of Hainault, paid to her royal daughter in the autumn of 1331. The mother of Philippa was a wise and good woman, who loved peace and promoted the peaceful arts. During her sojourn in England she further strengthened the beneficial alliance between England and the Low Countries by negotiating a marriage between the king's sister Eleanora and the duke of Gueldres, which was soon after celebrated.

Edward III. commenced a furious war on Scotland in 1333. His faithful queen followed his campaign, but while the king laid siege to Berwick, Philippa was in some danger at Bamborough Castle, where she resided that summer; for Douglas, the valiant guardian of his young king, turned the tables on the English invader, and made a forced march to lay fierce siege to Bamborough,[2] hoping that Edward, alarmed at the danger of his queen, would relinquish Berwick and fly to her assistance; but Edward knew too well the strength of "king Ina's castle broad and high," and the firm mind of his Philippa, to swerve from his designs on Berwick.

Yet the temper of Edward was certainly aggravated into ferociousness by the attempt to capture his queen, and he was led by sudden passion into the cruel murder of the two young Seatons. These unfortunate youths were the sons of the governor of Berwick, either given by him as hostages to Edward III. for the performance

[1] See the preceding memoir. [2] Guthrie, folio Hist.

of certain terms of surrender, or, what was still worse, were prisoners put to death because their father would not surrender his trust. Either way, the act was atrocious: perhaps it would have been prevented if the just and gracious Philippa had been by the side of her incensed lord. But Philippa was closely besieged in Bamborough, and her danger exasperated her husband into an act really worse than any performed by his stern grandsire, Edward I. The king knew that the Douglas was no trifler in any work he took in hand; he therefore resolved by a desperate blow to take Berwick, and march to relieve his queen from the attacks of the Scottish regent. He certainly gained Berwick from the stunned and paralyzed father, but by the murder of the hapless youths he for ever stained his chivalric name.

Douglas and Edward joined battle not far from Berwick soon after, and the Scots were overpowered at the disastrous battle of Halidon Hill. Edward, with his queen, afterwards triumphantly entered Berwick, which has ever since remained annexed to the English crown.[1]

Edward and Philippa were in England during the winter of 1334. At the palace of Woodstock, on February the 5th, the queen brought into the world Elizabeth,[2] (likewise called Isabella,) the princess royal.

[1] Edward Balliol invaded Scotland with the English army, having first sent a civil message to young king David, offering to secure to him the family estates of the Bruce, if he would surrender to him his kingdom and his wife, the young sister of king Edward. To this modest request the Scotch council (for the gallant Douglas lost his life at Halidon) replied by sending their young king and queen for safety to France, and preparing to defend their kingdom to the last gasp. Some authors declare that after this conquest Edward kept his Christmas at Roxburgh with his queen, but his government acts are dated in January at Wallingford.—*Guthrie.*

[2] The names of Isabella and Elizabeth were synonymous in the middle ages, to the confusion of history and genealogy.

The queen undertook another campaign in the succeeding spring, That year her father sent king Edward a present of a rich helmet made of gold and set with precious stones, with a remonstrance against wasting his strength in Scotland, where there was no plunder to be got, when the same expense would prosecute his claims on France. The queen this winter became the mother of a second princess, named Joanna. Philippa followed her lord to a third northern campaign. Her second son, William of Hatfield, was born in a village in Yorkshire in the winter of 1336: this infant lived but a few weeks.[1]

In the absence of Edward, the Scotch war was prosecuted by his only brother, John earl of Cornwall, with great cruelty; this young prince died at Perth, October the 5th, of a wound which he got in his ferocious attack on Lesmahago.[2]

While Philippa resided in the north of England a circumstance occurred which is an amusing instance of monastic etiquette. King Edward had returned from

[1] The accounts of the funeral expenses of this infant, who was buried in York Cathedral, are curious features in the Wardrobe Book of his father:—1336. "Paid for different masses about the body of lord William, son to the king, deceased; likewise for the purchase of three hundred and ninety-three pounds of wax, burnt round the prince's corpse at Hatfield, Pomfret, and York, where he was buried; and for three cloths of gold diapered, to be placed over the said corpse and tomb, also for a hood for the face, and for webs, linen, and hearses, March 3rd, ninth year of Edward III., 42*l.* 11*s.* 1½*d.*

"Paid for alms given by the king for the soul of his son William, divided between Hatfield and York, masses at Pomfret and York, and for widows watching round the said corpse, and burial service, 99*l.* 3*s.* 5½*d.*"

[2] Boethius affirms that Edward III., enraged at the cruelty of his brother for burning the church of Lesmahago with a thousand Scotch people therein, drew his sword and slew the young prince before the high altar of the church at Perth. So little is known of this prince, that the anecdote is worth recording; though the story of the deserved punishment of John is false, for Edward was not at Perth or in Scotland at that time.

Scotland, and advanced as far as Durham, where he established his lodging in St. Cuthbert's Priory, near the castle. The queen travelled from York to meet and welcome him. She supped in the priory, and, thinking it was no offence, retired to pass the night in her husband's apartment. Scarcely had she undressed when the affrighted monks came to the door, and pathetically remonstrated against the infringement of the rules of their order, intimating "that their holy patron St. Cuthbert, who during his life very sedulously eschewed the company of the fair sex, would be direfully offended if one of them slept beneath the roof of his convent, however high her rank might be." The pious Philippa, distressed at the idea of unwittingly offending St. Cuthbert, immediately rose from her bed in haste, fled in her night-dress to the castle, which was fortunately close by, and passed the night there by herself.[1]

The gout and other maladies put an end to the existence of count William of Hainault soon after he had formed a league against France with king Edward, and with the wealthy father of his queen Edward lost the liberal supplies with which he carried on his warfare. The English people chose always to be at war, but they expected their monarchs to find the cost out of their private revenues and feudal dues, which were certainly not sufficient for the purpose. Edward was reduced to extreme poverty even in the commencement of his long war, and obliged to pawn his queen's crown at Cologne for 2500*l.*, in the year 1339. Soon after the English people submitted, not to a tax *on* wool, but

[1] History of the Cathedral of Durham. The Priory is at present the residence of the dean.

a tax *of* wool, and subscribed 30,000 packs of that commodity,[1] which, being sent down the Rhine to Cologne, redeemed Philippa's best crown from thraldom. During the whole of this reign the crown jewels were seldom out of pawn, notwithstanding the wealth that the infant manufacture of cloth was already drawing to the coasts of England. The prosperity that the queen's colony of Flemish artists had brought to Norwich had been felt so early as 1336, when Philippa paid that city a visit during her husband's progress to Castle Rising. She was received by the grateful citizens with all the honours due to a public benefactress.

As vicar of the empire and head of the confederated league of Germany, Edward III. had his head-quarters, during several of his Flemish campaigns, at Antwerp and Ghent, where his queen kept her court. At Antwerp the third son of Philippa and Edward III. was born, November 29th, 1338. This prince was a true Fleming; being born in Flanders of a Flemish mother. In due time Prince Lionel grew to be nearly seven feet in height, and, being athletic in proportion, was a champion of whom any country might be proud.

The queen returned with this infant Hercules to England in the autumn of 1339, and in the ensuing year king Edward paid a long visit to his unhappy mother in Norfolk, while queen Philippa went to Norwich to visit her woollen manufactories. She found a vast number of Norwich people, who, having been apprentices of Kempe and his followers, were establishing themselves in the profitable trades of weaving and dyeing. She was received with great joy, and favoured the citizens with her presence from February to Easter.[2]

[1] Fœdera. Guthrie. Carte. Bloomfield's Norwich.

[2] Harding. Blomefield.

At the festivities of that season her royal lord held a grand tournament at Norwich, where he tilted in person.

In the spring of the same year Philippa again sailed for the opposite coast, and established her court at Ghent. King Edward, in the mean time, cruised between England and Holland, where he had a fleet of upwards of 300 ships. Philippa gave birth to her fourth son at Ghent, on Midsummer-day 1340, at the very time that her warlike lord was fighting his great naval battle off Blankenburg. Next day the king landed at Sluys, impatient to embrace his queen and her infant, and bring Philippa tidings of the greatest naval victory the English at that time had ever gained over France. Philippa's boy was John of Gaunt, afterwards so renowned as duke of Lancaster.

The interference of the mother of Philippa about this time occasioned a temporary cessation of hostilities between France and England.[1] This princess, just as the belligerents were about to engage before Tournay, went to her son-in-law, and then to her brother king Philip, and, kneeling before them, implored them to make peace and stop the effusion of Christian blood.[2]

[1] Froissart. Jeanne of Valois had retired into a convent after the death of her husband, the count of Hainault. This retreat was fired by her brother king Philip's troops in this war.

[2] The relationship between Edward's queen and the competitor for the throne of France was near; she was both his niece and name-child, and the veneration and love which her mother bore to king Philip were excessive. The motives that prompted the mother of Philippa to interfere in this extraordinary manner between armies ready to engage are perfectly consistent with the spirit of the middle ages. Her kinsman, king Roger of Sicily, a royal astrologer, had cast the nativities of Philip and Edward, and declared that he foresaw the discomfiture of the king of France if ever he fought against his rival. The letters of king Roger, alarming the sisterly fears of the countess Jeanne, induced her interference. At Tournay Edward was endeavouring to provoke Philip into a personal combat. This excellent

The pacification effected by the mother of queen Philippa for a while put a stop to this kindred warfare. It was indeed time, for both the mighty Edward and his faithful queen were literally in a state of bankruptcy. She had given up her crown and all the jewels she possessed, which her royal lord had pawned to the Flemish merchants; but his wants were still so great, that to raise a further sum he likewise pawned the person of his valiant kinsman the earl of Derby,[1] who actually gave himself up to personal restraint, while Edward stole away with his queen, and the child she nourished, to Zealand. Here he embarked with Philippa and the infant John of Gaunt, attended by a few servants. The ship was small, the weather stormy, and the royal passengers were in frequent danger of losing their lives. However, at midnight, December 2, 1340, the queen and her infant landed safely on Tower wharf. Here the king found that three nurses, and the rest of

method of determining a succession of war, Philip declined, because the cartel was not directed to the king of France. Upon this, the whole English camp cried out on the cowardice of Philip, and a poet belonging to Edward, possessing more loyalty than Latin, wrote the following couplet:—

Si valeas, venias, Valois! depelle timorem,
Non lateas; pateas; moveas. Ostende vigorem.

Which may be rendered,

Valois, be valiant! vile fear can't avail thee:
Hide not, avoid not, let not vigour fail thee.

Edward, who had himself sent a rhyming declaration of war to Philip, swore these were valiant verses, and caused them to be fastened to an arrow, and shot into Philip's encampment.

[1] Carte. Guthrie. Caley's Fœdera.—He remained in prison, being detained by Matthew Concanen and partners, merchants of the firm of the Leopard. Edward obtained supplies of his parliament next year, by declaring that, if he was not enabled to redeem his honour and his cousin the earl of Derby, he would go to Flanders and surrender his royal person to his creditors. In answer to this appeal, the commons granted the fleece of the ninth sheep and the ninth lamb throughout England, coin seeming to be as scarce with the subjects as with their royal master and mistress.

the royal children, were the sole occupants of his regal fortress of the Tower; the careless constable, Nicholas de la Beche, had decamped that evening to visit a lady-love in the city, and his warders and soldiers, following so good an example, had actually left the Tower to take care of itself.[1] The great Edward, who was not in the mildest of tempers, owing to the untoward state of his finances, took possession of the fortress of his capital in a towering rage. As his return was wholly unexpected, the consternation of constable de la Beche may be supposed when he had concluded his city visit. It was well for the careless castellan that the gentle Philippa was by the side of her incensed lord at that juncture.

About this time, the heart of the mighty Edward swerved for a while from its fidelity to Philippa; and had not the royal hero been enamoured of a lady of exemplary virtue, the peace of the queen might have been for ever destroyed. Sir William Montacute had been rewarded for the good service he did the king in the beginning of his reign by the title of the earl of Salisbury. He had married the fair Catherine de Grason,[2] and received the castellanship of Wark Castle, whither he had taken his countess, who lived in retirement away from the court. In the mean time

[1] Froissart and several chroniclers.

[2] In Milles' Catalogue of Honour, the parentage of the countess of Salisbury is clearly traced. She was the daughter of William de Grason, a Burgundian knight of imperial lineage, a favourite of Edmund earl of Lancaster, who prevailed on Sibyl, heiress of Lord Tregose of Wiltshire, to marry his friend. Grason possessed nothing in the world but a handsome person, and a pedigree derived from the emperors of Constantinople. Catherine the Fair was the only child of this couple, and was endowed richly with her mother's wealth and her father's beauty. She bestowed both on the brave earl of Salisbury. Dugdale confirms this account, by quoting charters, in which he calls the countess Catherine de Grandison; of this name, Grason is an evident abbreviation.

Salisbury had been captured in the French war. His castle in the north, which was defended by his countess and his nephew, was besieged in the second Scottish war by king David. When in great danger, young Montacute, by a bold personal adventure, carried the news of the distress of the countess to king Edward, who was encamped near Berwick. At the approach of Edward, the king of Scots raised the siege of Wark. The royal hero's interview with Catherine the Fair follows in the words of Froissart:—

"The moment the countess heard of the king's approach she ordered all the gates to be thrown open, and went to meet him most richly dressed, insomuch that no one could look at her but with wonder and admiration at her noble deportment, great beauty, and affability of behaviour. When she came near king Edward she made her obeisance to the ground, and gave him thanks for coming to her assistance, and then conducted him into the castle, to entertain and honour him, as she was very capable of doing.

"Every one was delighted with her; but the king could not take his eyes off from her, so that a *spark of fine love* struck upon his heart, which lasted a long time, for he did not believe that the whole world produced any other lady so worthy of being beloved. Thus they entered the castle hand in hand. The countess led him first to the hall, and then to the best chamber, which was very richly furnished, as belonging to so fine a lady. King Edward kept his eyes so fixed upon the countess, that the gentle dame was quite abashed. After he had sufficiently examined his apartment he retired to a window, and leaning on it fell into a profound reverie.

"The countess left him to order dinner to be made ready, and the tables set, and the hall ornamented and

set out; likewise to welcome the knights and lords who accompanied the king. When she had given all the orders to her servants she thought needful, she returned with a cheerful countenance to king Edward, and said—

"'Dear sir, what are you musing on? Such meditating is not proper for you, saving your grace. You ought rather to be in high spirits, having freed England from her enemy without loss of blood.'

"The king replied,—

"'Oh, dear lady, you must know that, since I have been in this castle, some thoughts have oppressed my mind that I was not before aware of; so that it behoves me to reflect. Being uncertain what may be the event, I cannot withdraw my attention."

"'Dear sir,' answered the lady, you ought to be of good cheer, and feast with your friends to give them more pleasure, and leave off pondering; for God has been very bountiful to you in your undertakings, so that you are the most feared and renowned prince in Christendom. If the king of Scotland have vexed you by the mischiefs he hath done in your kingdom, you will speedily be able to make reprisals in his dominions. Therefore come, if it please you, into the hall to your knights, for dinner will soon be served.'

"'Oh, sweet lady,' said king Edward, 'there be other things which touch my heart, and lie heavy there, than what you talk of. For, in good truth, your beauteous mien, and the perfections of your face and behaviour, have wholly overcome me, and so deeply impress my heart that my happiness wholly depends on meeting a return to my flame, which no denial from you can ever extinguish.'

"'Oh, my dread lord,' replied the countess, 'do not

amuse yourself by laughing at me with trying to tempt me, for I cannot believe you are in earnest as to what you have just said. Is it likely that so noble and gallant a prince as you are would ever think of dishonouring either me or my husband, a valiant knight who has served you so faithfully, and who now lies in a doleful prison on your account? Certainly, sir, this would not redound to your glory; nor would you be the better for it if you could have your wayward will.'

"The virtuous lady then quitted the king, who was astonished at her words. She went into the hall to hasten dinner; afterwards she approached the king's chamber, attended by all the knights, and said to him

"'My lord king, your knights are all waiting for you, to wash their hands; for they, as well as yourself, have fasted too long.'

"King Edward left his apartment and came to the hall, where, after he had washed his hands, he seated himself with his knights at the dinner, as did the lady also; but the king ate very little, and was the whole time pensive, casting his eyes, whenever he had the opportunity, on the countess. Such behaviour surprised his friends, for they were not accustomed to it, never having seen the like before in the king. They supposed it was his chagrin at the departure of the Scots without a battle. The king remained at the castle the whole day, without knowing what to do with himself. Thus did he pass that day and a sleepless night, debating the matter with his own heart. At daybreak he rose, drew out his whole army, raised his camp, and made ready to follow the Scots. Upon taking leave of the countess, he said,

"'My dear lady, God preserve you safe till I return,

and I pray that you will think well of what I have said, and have the goodness to give me a different answer.'

"'My gracious liege,' replied the countess, 'God of his infinite goodness preserve you, and drive from your noble heart such villanous thoughts; for I am, and ever shall be, ready to serve you, but only in what is consistent with my honour and with yours.'

"The king left her, quite astonished at her answers."

The love of king Edward wandered from queen Philippa but for a short time, yet it was owing to the high principles of Catherine the Fair he never swerved into the commission of evil.[1]

Queen Philippa, attired in the august robes of the new order, of the Garter, and attended by the ladies

[1] Though he appears still to have cherished a chivalric and heroic attachment for the countess, he soon showed that he had resigned what she very properly told him were "villanous thoughts." In proof of this fact, we find him directly making a two years' truce with the king of Scotland, one of the conditions of which was, that king David should undertake a negotiation with his ally the king of France to exchange the earl of Moray, a prisoner of king Edward, for the earl of Salisbury, then in captivity in the dismal towers of the Chatelet.—*Froissart*, vol. i. p. 297.

[2] The story that the origin of this order, the Order of the Garter, took its rise from an accident that happened to the countess of Salisbury's dress, when dancing with king Edward III., must be untrue, since we have seen that the knights of the blue garter were confederated by Cœur de Lion long before the countess was born; therefore the garter was a part of the order that had been devised many years previously to the era of king Edward. But that the countess of Salisbury was considered the heroine of the newly revived order, we have the express words of Froissart as follows:—

"You have all heard how passionately king Edward was smitten with the charms of that noble lady Catherine countess of Salisbury. Out of affection to the said lady, and his desire to see her, he proclaimed a great feast in August 1343. He commanded all his own lords and knights should be there without fail, and he expressly ordered the earl of Salisbury to bring the lady his wife, with as many young ladies as she could collect to attend her. The earl very cheerfully complied with the king's request, *for he*

whom the gallantry of king Edward associated with his knights,[1] assisted her royal lord in holding the first chapter at Windsor, on St. George's-day, 1344.

Philippa kept the birthday of her mighty lord with great festivity at Woodstock, in the year 1345.[2] Here, in that sylvan palace, where she had spent the first years of her happy wedlock, did she find herself, in middle life, surrounded by a train of beautiful children, at the head of whom was Edward prince of Wales, then

thought no evil; and his good lady dared not say nay. She came, however, much against her will, for she guessed the reason which made the king so earnest for her attendance, but was afraid to discover it to her husband, intending by her conduct and conversation to make the king change his opinion."

Froissart likewise adds, "that all the ladies and damsels who assisted at the first convocation of the Order of the Garter came superbly dressed, excepting the countess of Salisbury, who attended the festival dressed as plainly as possible: she did not wish the king to admire her, for she had no intention to obey him *in anything evil* that might tend to the dishonour of her dear lord." Froissart's repetition of the expression "anything evil" is certainly in allusion to the mysterious motto of the order: indeed, the expressions in italics are a mere variation of the same words in the French copies of Froissart.

The Garter robes of queen Philippa are charged in the wardrobe accounts. —Exchequer Rolls.

[1] For several ages after the institution of the order of the Garter, every knight was accompanied by his lady, who was considered to belong to it. Sir Harris Nicolas, in his admirable work on the order of the Garter, fully proves that the ladies of the knights wore its badge. Several monuments still exist where it may be seen. Among others, the monumental statue of lady Harcourt, at Stanton Harcourt, displays the order of the Garter, with the celebrated motto on the left arm. She was born a Byron, and married Sir Robert Harcourt, elected knight in 1463. The effigy of the duchess of Suffolk, granddaughter to Chaucer, at Ewelme church, has the garter and motto buckled round the left arm, not as an armlet, but as a bracelet. The lady Tankerville, whose statue was lately at St. Katharine's by the Tower, had the same noble badge on her left arm. If the ladies companions of this noble order were restored according to the original institution of Edward III. and Philippa, how much splendour would such improvement add to the court of our fair queen!

[2] Walsingham.

on the eve of winning his vast meed of renown. Philippa's protégé, Chaucer, has in these elegant lines described one lovely feature of the favourite retreat of his royal mistress. He speaks of a maple,

> " . . . . that is fair and green,
> Before the chamber-windows of the queen
> At Woodstock."

PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT,

QUEEN OF EDWARD III.

CHAPTER II.

Queen Philippa left regent of England—Battle of Cressy—Queen's uncles—Siege of Calais—Scotch invasion—Queen defends England—Queen's exhortation to the army—Her victory of Neville's Cross—King David captured—Queen returns to London—Sails with many ladies to Calais—Burghers of Calais doomed to death by Edward—Philippa's intercession—Birth of princess Margaret—Edward and Philippa return to England—Betrothment of the queen's second daughter—Death of the princess—King Edward's letters—Queen's younger children—Philippa's tournament at Norwich—Queen's objections to the marriage of the Black Prince—Queen receives royal prisoners—Dialogue with Du Guesclin—Queen goes to France—Marriage of the Black Prince—Queen's reception of king John at Eltham—Alliances of royal family—Philippa's fatal illness—Death-bed—Tomb—Epitaph—Benefactions—Queen's College, Oxford—Pensions to her women—Alice Perrers—Queen's supposed confession—Virtues of queen Philippa.

In the first years of her marriage queen Philippa had been the constant attendant on her husband in his campaigns; the annals of the year 1346 display her character in a more brilliant light, as the sagacious ruler of his kingdom and the victorious leader of his army.

After the order of the Garter had been fully established, king Edward reminded his valiant knights and nobles that with him they made a vow to assist dis-

tressed ladies; he then specified that the countess de Montfort particularly required the aid of his chivalry, for her lord was held in captivity by Philip de Valois in the towers of the Louvre, while the countess was endeavouring to uphold the cause of her infant son against the whole power of France. He signified his intention of giving his personal support to the heroic countess, and of leaving queen Philippa as regent of England during his absence.

On St. John the Baptist's day the king took leave of queen Philippa, appointing the earl of Kent as her assistant in the government of England. The name of her young son Lionel,[1] a child of eight years old, was associated with his mother in the regency. Philippa bade farewell to the darling of her heart, Edward, then in his sixteenth year. This young hero accompanied his royal sire, in order to win his spurs on the soil of France. The exploits of the heroic boy are well known; but it is not quite so well known that he was opposed at the field of Cressy to his mother's nearest connexions—to her uncle Philip of Valois, and even to Sir John of Hainault, that favourite relative who had ever been treated by the queen as if he were her father. In the true spirit of a mercenary soldier, Sir John had left the service of his niece's husband, in whose employment he had spent the best part of his life, merely because the king of France gave him a higher salary.

The first English military despatch ever written was addressed to queen Philippa and her council by Michael Northborough, king Edward's warlike chaplain: it contains a most original and graphic detail of the battle of Cressy. It is dated at the siege before

[1] This child sat on the throne when parliaments were held.

the town of Calais, for the battle of Cressy was but an interlude of that famous siege.

It was now Philippa's turn to do battle-royal with a king. As a diversion in favour of France, David of Scotland advanced into England a fortnight after the battle of Cressy, and burned the suburbs of York. At this juncture Philippa herself hastened to the relief of her northern subjects. Froissart has detailed with great spirit the brilliant conduct of the queen at this crisis:—

"The queen of England, who was very anxious to defend her kingdom, in order to show she was in earnest about it, came herself to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She took up her residence there to wait for her forces. On the morrow the king of Scots, with full forty thousand men, advanced within three short miles of the town of Newcastle; he sent to inform the queen that, if her men were willing to come forth from the town, he would wait and give them battle. Philippa answered 'that she accepted his offer, and that her barons would risk their lives for the realm of their lord the king.'"

The queen's army drew up in order for battle at Neville's Cross. Philippa advanced among them mounted on her white charger, and entreated her men to do their duty well in defending the honour of their lord the king, and urged them for the love of God to fight manfully. They promised her that they would acquit themselves loyally to the utmost of their power, and perhaps better than if the king had been there in person. The queen then took her leave of them, and recommended them "to the protection of God and St. George."

There is no vulgar personal bravado of the fighting

woman in the character of Philippa. Her courage was wholly moral courage, and her feminine feelings of mercy and tenderness led her, when she had done all that a great queen could do by encouraging her army, to withdraw from the work of carnage, and pray for her invaded kingdom while the battle joined.

The English archers gained the battle, which was fought on the lands of Lord Neville.[1] King David was taken prisoner on his homeward retreat, but not without making the most gallant resistance.

"When the queen of England (who had tarried in Newcastle while the battle was fought) heard that her army had won the victory, she mounted on her white palfrey and went to the battle-field. She was informed on the way that the king of Scots was the prisoner of a squire named John Copeland, who had rode off with him no one knew whither.[2] The queen ordered him to be sought out, and told 'that he had done what was not agreeable to her in carrying off her prisoner without leave.' All the rest of the day the queen and her army remained on the battle-field they had won, and then returned to Newcastle for the night."

Next day Philippa wrote with her own hand to John Copeland, commanding him to surrender the king of

[1] The Saturday before Michaelmas-day, 1346, fifteen thousand Scots were slain. There is reason to suppose that, where Froissart names Newcastle, the word should be Durham, since the English army certainly mustered in the Bishop's park at Auckland, and Neville's Cross itself is distant but one mile west of Durham.

[2] Knighton says he lodged him in the strong fortress of Bamborough. King David was determined to provoke Copeland to kill him, knowing the miseries his captivity would cause his country. His resistance was terrific; he dashed his gauntlet on Copeland's mouth when called on to surrender, and knocked out several of his teeth. Copeland kept his temper, and succeeded in capturing him alive.

Scots to her. John answered in a manner most contumacious to the female majesty then swaying the sceptre of England with so much ability and glory. He replied to Philippa "that he would not give up his royal prisoner to woman or child,[1] but only to his own lord king Edward, for to him he had sworn allegiance, and not to any woman." There spoke the haughty spirit of feudality, which disdained to obey a female regent, although then encamped on a victorious field.

The queen was greatly troubled at the obstinacy of this northern squire, and scarcely knew how to depend on the assurance he added, bidding her knight tell the queen "she might depend on his taking good care of king David." In this dilemma Philippa wrote letters to the king her husband, which she sent off directly to Calais. In these letters she informed him of the state of his kingdom.

The king then ordered John Copeland to come to him at Calais, who, having placed his prisoner in a strong castle in Northumberland, set out, and landed near Calais. When the king of England saw the squire, he took him by the hand, saying, "Ha! welcome, my squire, who by thy valour has captured mine adversary the king of Scots."

John Copeland fell on one knee, and replied, "If God out of his great kindness has given me the king of Scotland, and permitted me to conquer him in arms, no one ought to be jealous of it, for God can, if he pleases, send his grace to a poor squire as well as to a great lord. Sire, do not take it amiss if I did not surrender king David to the orders of my lady queen, for I hold my lands of *you*, and not of *her*, and my

[1] Philippa was associated with the young prince Lionel in the regency.

oath is to you, and not to her, unless, indeed, through choice."

King Edward answered, "John, the loyal service you have done us, and our esteem for your valour, is so great, that it may well serve you as an excuse, and shame fall on all those who bear you any ill-will. You will now return home and take your prisoner, the king of Scotland, and convey him to my wife, and by way of remuneration I assign lands as near your house as you can choose them, to the amount of 500*l.* a year, for you and your heirs."[1] John Copeland left Calais the third day after his arrival, and returned to England. When he was come home he assembled his friends and neighbours, and, in company with them, took the king of Scots and carried him to York, where he presented him, in the name of king Edward, to queen Philippa, and made such excuses that she was satisfied.

And great magnanimity Philippa displayed in being content with the happy result; how many women would have borne an unextinguishable hatred to John Copeland for a far less offence than refusing obedience to a delegated sceptre!

Philippa lodged David in the Tower of London; he was conducted by her orders, in grand procession, through the streets, mounted on a tall black war-horse, that every one might recognise his person in case of escape.

The queen next day sailed for Calais, and landed three days before All Saints.[2] The arrival of Philippa occasioned a stir of gladness in the besieging camp.

[1] Copeland was likewise made a knight banneret: he was afterwards shériff of Northumberland and warden of Berwick.

[2] October 29th.

Her royal lord held a grand court to welcome his victorious queen, and made a magnificent fête for her ladies. Philippa brought with her the flower of the female nobility of England, many ladies being anxious to voyage with her to Calais, in order to see fathers, husbands, and brothers, all engaged at this famous siege.

While queen Philippa was encamped with her royal lord before Calais, the young count of Flanders, who had been kept by Edward in his army as a sort of captive, ran away to the king of France to avoid his marriage engagements with the princess royal—a circumstance which caused great grief and indignation to the queen and her family. But the conduct of the young lord of Flanders can scarcely excite wonder; for Edward III., certainly forgetting *son métier du roi*, was in a strong league with the count's rebellious subject, the brewer Von Artavelt, who, under pretence of reform, had overturned the government of Flanders,[1] and delivered up its count to the king of England, the states of Flanders having betrothed him to the eldest daughter of Edward without consulting his inclinations.[2]

The young count at last requested an interview with his betrothed. What passed is not known, but the young couple seemed on the most friendly terms with each other; and the queen, supposing the charms of the young Isabella had captivated the unwilling heart of count Louis, with her usual generosity requested he might be left unguarded, fancying he would remain

[1] Queen Philippa, when in Flanders, stood godmother to the son of Edward's democratic ally, afterwards the famous Philip von Artavelde. "To this infant," says the chronicler "she gave at the font her own name of Philip."

[2] Froissart.

Isabella's willing prisoner. But the escape of the count followed soon after, to the great exasperation of Edward III. As Isabella afterwards made a love-match, the whole scheme had probably been concerted between her and her betrothed; for life in the fourteenth century was an acted romance.

Meantime, the brave defenders of Calais were so much reduced by famine as to be forced to capitulate. At first Edward resolved to put them all to the sword. By the persuasions of Sir Walter Mauny he somewhat relaxed from his bloody intentions. "He bade Sir Walter," says Froissart, "return to Calais with the following terms:—

"'Tell the governor of Calais that the garrison and inhabitants shall be pardoned, excepting six of the principal citizens, who must surrender themselves to death with ropes round their necks, bareheaded, and barefooted, bringing the keys of the town and castle in their hands.'

"Sir Walter returned to the brave governor of Calais, John de Vienne, who was waiting for him on the battlements, and told him all he had been able to gain from the king. The Lord of Vienne went to the market-place, and caused the bell to be rung, upon which all the inhabitants assembled in the town-hall. He then related to them what he had said, and the answers he had received, and that he could not obtain better conditions. Then they broke into lamentations of grief and despair, so that the hardest heart would have had compassion on them, and their valiant governor, Lord de Vienne, wept bitterly. After a short pause, the most wealthy citizen of Calais, by name Eustace St. Pierre, rose up and said, 'Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be pity to suffer so many of our

countrymen to die through famine; it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour if such misery could be prevented. If I die to save my dear townsmen, I trust I shall find grace before the tribunal of God. I name myself first of the six.'

"When Eustace had done speaking, his fellow-citizens all rose up and almost adored him, casting themselves on their knees with tears and groans. Then another citizen rose up, and said he would be the second to Eustace; his name was John Daire: after him James Wisant, who was very rich in money and lands, and kinsman to Eustace and John; his example was followed by Peter Wisant, his brother; two others[1] then offered themselves, which completed the number demanded by king Edward. The governor mounted a small horse, for it was with difficulty he could walk, and conducted them through the gate to the barriers; he said to Sir Walter, who was there waiting for him,—

"'I deliver up to you, as governor of Calais, these six citizens and swear to you they were, and are at this day, the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of the town. I beg of you gentle sir, that of your goodness you would beseech the king that they may not be put to death.'

"'I cannot answer what the king will do with them,' replied Sir Walter; 'but you may depend upon this, that I will do all I can to save them.'

"The barriers were then opened and the six citizens were conducted to the pavilion of king Edward. When Sir Walter Mauny had presented these six citizens to the king, they fell upon their knees, and with uplifted hands said,—

[1] English tradition declares that one of these was the young son of Eustace St. Pierre.

"'Most gallant king, see before you six citizens of Calais, who have been capital merchants, and who bring you the keys of the town and castle. We surrender ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save the remainder of our fellow-citizens and inhabitants of Calais, who have suffered great distress and misery. Condescend, then, out of your nobleness, to have compassion on us.'

"All the English barons, knights, and squires that were assembled there in great numbers, wept at this sight; but king Edward eyed them with angry looks, for he hated much the people of Calais, because of the great losses he had suffered at sea by them. Forthwith he ordered the heads of the six citizens to be struck off. All present entreated the king to be more merciful, but he would not listen to them. Then Sir Walter Mauny spoke:—

"'Ah, gentle king, I beseech you restrain your anger. Tarnish not your noble reputation by such an act as this! Truly, the whole world will cry out on your cruelty, if you should put to death these six worthy persons.'

"For all this, the king gave a wink to his marshal, and said, 'I will have it so;' and ordered the headsman to be sent for, adding, 'the men of Calais had done him such damage, it was fit they suffered for it.'

"At this, the queen of England, who was very near her lying-in, fell on her knees before king Edward, and with tears said,—

"'Ah, gentle sir, sithence I have crossed the sea with great peril to see you, I have never asked you one favour; now, I most humbly ask as a gift, for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and as a proof of your love to me, the lives of these six men.'

"King Edward looked at her for some time in silence, and then said,—

"'Ah, lady, I wish you had been anywhere else than here; you have intreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you. I therefore give them you—do as you please with them.'

"The queen conducted the six citizens to her apartments, and had the halters taken from about their necks, after which she new clothed them and served them with a plentiful dinner; she then presented each with six nobles, and had them escorted out of the camp in safety."

The French historians, who, from mortified national pride, have endeavoured to invalidate this beautiful incident, pretend to do so by proving, as an inconsistency in the character of Philippa, that she took possession, a few days after the surrender of Calais, of the tenements belonging to one of her protégés, John Daire. They have likewise impugned the patriotism of Eustace St. Pierre,[1] because he remained in Calais as Edward's subject. But king Edward granted immunity to all those who swore allegiance to him and staid in Calais, while those who chose expatriation, like John Daire, forfeited their tenements, which they certainly could not take with them. Now Froissart has shown that Edward presented his Calisian captives to his queen, to "do with them what she pleased;" this transfer gave Philippa rights over their persons and property, which she used most generously in re-

[1] Eustace was not a soldier, vowed to his banner, like the lord de Vienne, but a burgher, attached by many inhabitative ties to his town. He was firmly loyal to his prince while Philip could extend kingly protection to his lieges at Calais; but when Philip was forced to leave Calais to its fate, the same necessity obliged Eustace to transfer his allegiance. Expatriation is not the bounden duty of a citizen.

gard to the first, but retained her claims over the possessions in the town of those who refused to become subjects to her husband. The very fact, proved by deeds and charters, that Philippa became proprietress of John Daire's houses, greatly authenticates the statement of Froissart.

It would have been pleasant to record that Philippa restored the value of John Daire's tenements. But biography, unlike poetry or romance, seldom permits us to pourtray a character approaching perfection. Truth compels us to display the same person by turns merciful or ferocious, generous or acquisitive, according to the mutability of human passion. The philosophic observer of life will see no outrage on probability in the facts that Philippa saved John Daire's life one day, and took possession of his vacated spoils the next week.

"The king, after he had bestowed these six citizens on queen Philippa, called to him Sir Walter Mauny, and his two marshals, the earls of Warwick and Stafford, and said,—

"'My lords, here are the keys of Calais town and castle; go and take possession.'[1] Directions were given for the castle to be prepared with proper lodgings for the king and queen. When this had been done, the king and queen mounted their steeds and rode towards the town, which they entered with the sound of trumpets, drums, and all sorts of warlike instruments. The king remained in Calais till the queen was brought to bed of a daughter named Margaret."

[1] Froissart. The siege lasted from June 1346 to August 1347. Walsingham declares king Edward spared the people of Calais in life and limb—an observation he would scarcely have made if the contrary had not been expected.

Three days before Edward and Philippa returned to England, the emperor Louis of Bavaria died, who had married Marguerite of Hainault, the eldest sister of the queen. Towards the close of the same year, Edward was elected emperor of Germany, an honour of which he very wisely declined the acceptance. At this time it was considered that the royal Philippa and her husband had touched the height of human prosperity.

With the exception of the trifling disappointment in the disposal of the hand of her eldest daughter, the year 1347 closed most auspiciously for Philippa and her warlike lord. But the military triumphs of England brought with them some corruption of manners. At that time the jewels and ornaments that once decorated the females of France were transferred to the persons of the English ladies, who, out of compliment to the queen's successful generalship, and the personal heroism of the valiant countess of Montfort, her kinswoman, began to give themselves the airs of warriors; they wore small jewelled daggers as ornaments at their bosoms, and their caps, formed of cambric or lawn, were cut like the aperture of a knight's helmet. But these objectionable caps brought their own punishment with them, being hideously unbecoming. The church was preparing suitable remonstrances against these unfeminine proceedings, wh n all pride, whether royal or national, was at once ignally confounded by the awful visitation of pestilence which approached the shores of England 1348.

This pestilence was called emphatically, from its effects on the human body, the Black Death. Every household in London was smitten, and some wholly exterminated; nor did Philippa's royal family escape, for

the cruel pestilence robbed her of the fairest of her daughters, under circumstances of peculiar horror.

The beauty and graces of the second daughter of Philippa, called the princess Joanna of Woodstock, were such as to be the themes of every minstrel; she was in her fifteenth year when Alphonso king of Castile demanded her in marriage for his heir, the Infant Pedro, who afterwards attained an undesirable celebrity under the name of Pedro the Cruel. The princess had been nurtured and educated by that virtuous lady Marie St. Pol, the widowed countess of Pembroke, to whose munificent love of learning Cambridge owes one of her noblest foundations.[1] As a reward for rearing and educating the young princess, king Edward gave the countess, her governess, the manor of Stroud in Kent, with many expressions of gratitude, calling her his dearest cousin Marie de St. Pol.[2]

The fair Joanna was spared the torment of becoming the wife of the most furious man in Europe, by the more merciful plague of the Black Death. The royal bride sailed for Bordeaux at the latter end of the summer of 1348, while her father-in-law, the king of Castile, travelled to the frontier city, Bayonne, with the infant Don Pedro, to meet her. King Edward's loyal citizens of Bordeaux escorted the princess Joanna as far as Bayonne, in the cathedral of which city she was to give her hand to Pedro. On the very evening of her triumphal entry into Bayonne, the pestilence, out of all the assembled multitudes, seized on the fair

1 This lady had been rendered a widow on her bridal day, by her newly-wedded lord being killed at the tournament given in honour of his nuptials. The maiden widow never married again, but devoted her great wealth to charity and the promotion of learning.

2 Fœdera, vol. v.

young Plantagenet as a victim; it terminated her existence in a few hours: her Spanish bridegroom and the king his father followed her funeral procession on the very day and hour that she was appointed to give her hand as a bride at the altar of that cathedral wherein she was buried.

The deep grief of the parents of Joanna is visible in the Latin letters written by Edward III. to the king of Castile, to Don Pedro, and to the queen of Castile. If the Latinity of these letters will not bear the criticism of the classical scholar, they are, nevertheless, lofty in sentiment, and breathe an expression of parental tenderness seldom to be found in state papers.

"Your daughter and ours," he says to the queen of Castile, "was by nature wonderfully endowed with gifts and graces, but little does it now avail to praise them, or specify the charms of that beloved one who is (O grief of heart!) for ever taken from us. Yet the debt of mortality must be paid, however deeply sorrow may drive the thorn, and our hearts be transpierced by anguish. Nor will our sighs and tears cancel the inevitable law of nature. Christ, the celestial spouse, has taken the maiden bride to be his spouse. She, in her innocent and immaculate years, has been transferred to the virgin choir in heaven, where, for us below, she will perpetually intercede."

The queen must have imagined that her royal and handsome progeny was doomed to a life of celibacy, for some extraordinary accident had hitherto prevented the marriage of her daughters. Her heroic son Edward had been on the point of marrying several princesses, without his nuptials ever being brought to a conclusion.

A long attachment had subsisted between him and his beautiful cousin Joanna, daughter of his uncle Edmund earl of Kent, and the lady had remained unwedded till her twenty-fifth year, after being divorced from the earl of Salisbury, to whom she had been contracted in her infancy. Queen Philippa had a great objection to her son's union with his cousin,[1] on account of the flightiness of the lady's disposition. After vainly hoping for the royal consent to her union with her cousin, Joanna gave her hand to Sir Thomas Holland, but still the Black Prince remained a bachelor.

After the grand crisis of the capture of Calais Philippa resided chiefly in England. Our country felt the advantage of the beneficent presence of its queen. Philippa had in her youth established the woollen manufactures: she now turned her sagacious intellect towards working the coal-mines in Tynedale—a branch of national industry whose inestimable benefits need not be dilated upon. The mines had been worked with great profit in the reign of Henry III., but the convulsions of the Scottish wars had stopped their progress. Philippa had estates in Tynedale, and she had long resided in its vicinity during Edward's Scottish campaigns. It was an infallible result, that, wherever this great queen directed her attention, wealth and national prosperity speedily followed. Well did her actions illustrate her Flemish motto, *Iche wrude muche*, which obsolete words may be rendered, "I labour or toil much." Soon after her return from Calais she obtained

1 Guthrie mentions the long celibacy of Joanna, the Fair Maid of Kent, previously to her union with Holland. Froissart speaks of Philippa's objections to the marriage of Edward with his cousin, and very freely enters into some scandalous stories regarding her.

a grant from her royal lord,[1] giving permission to her bailiff, Alan de Strothere, to work the mines of Alderneston, which had been worked in the days of King Henry III. and Edward I. From this re-opening of the Tynedale mines by Philippa proceeded our coal-trade, which, during the reign of her grandson, Henry IV., enriched the great merchant Whittington and the city of London.

The queen continued to increase the royal family. The Princess Mary, who afterwards married the duke of Bretagne; Prince William, born at Windsor, who died in his twelfth year; Edmund, afterwards Duke of York, and Blanche of the Tower,[2] were born before the surrender of Calais; the Princess Margaret and Thomas of Woodstock, afterwards. Edward's presents to his queen on these occasions were munificent. One of his grants is thus affectionately worded—

July 20. The king orders his exchequer to pay "our Philippa, our dearest consort, five hundred pounds, to liquidate the expenses of her churching at Windsor."[3] This was on occasion of the birth of Prince William, Philippa's second son of that name.

Philippa did not disdain the alliance of the great English nobles; her objection to the union of Edward, her chivalric heir, with Joanna the Fair, arose solely from disapprobation of the moral character of that princess.[4] Her next surviving son, Lionel, she not only united to an English maiden, but undertook the wardship and education of his young bride, as may be learned from this document. "January 1, 1347. Edward III.

1 Caley's Fœdera. To this grant is added a curious clause giving permission to Robert de Veteriponte and his heirs to be called kings of Tynedale.

2 Walsingham. 3 Caley's Fœdera. 4 Froissart, vol. xi.

gives to his dearest consort Philippa the wardship of the person of Elizabeth de Burgh, daughter to the deceased earl of Ulster, (slain in Ireland,) with her lands and lordships, until Lionel, yet in tender years, shall take the young Elizabeth to wife." Two of Philippa's sons were married to Englishwomen by her special agency.

Queen Philippa, with her son the Black Prince, paid a visit to Norwich in 1350, and there held a magnificent tournament. The royal mother and her heroic son were received by the inhabitants of the city, enriched by her statistical wisdom, with the utmost gratitude, and were entertained by the corporation at an expense of thirty-seven pounds four shillings and sixpence half-penny, as appears by their records.

The grand victory of Poictiers distinguished the year 1357. A prouder day than that of Neville's Cross was the 5th of May, 1357, when Edward the Black Prince landed at Sandwich with his royal prisoner King John, and presented him to his mother, after that glorious entry into London where the prince tacitly gave John the honours of a suzerain, by permitting him to mount the famous white charger on which he rode at Poictiers, and which was captured with him.[2]

At the same time that the queen received her vanquished kinsman, her son presented to her another prisoner, young as he was, far fiercer in his captivity than the king of France; this was Philip, the fourth son of King John, a little hero of fourteen, who had fought desperately by his father's side on the lost field, and had been captured with some difficulty alive, and not till he

1 Caley's Fœdera.

2 The white horse was always in the middle ages the sign of sovereignity. Giffard mentions the interesting fact that this white steed was a captive as well as his master.—*Hist. of France.*

was desperately wounded.[1] The first day of his arrival at the court of England he gave a proof of his fierceness, by starting from the table where he sat at dinner with the king and queen and his father, and boxing the ears of King Edward's cup-bearer for serving the king of England before the king of France; "for," he said, "though his father King John was unfortunate, he was the sovereign of the king of England." Edward and Philippa only smiled at the boy's petulance, and treated him with indulgent benevolence; and when he quarrelled with the Prince of Wales at a game of chess, they most courteously decided the disputed move in favour of Prince Philip.

That renowned champion, Sir Bertrand du Guesclin, was one of the prisoners of Poictiers. One day, when Queen Philippa was entertaining at her court a number of the noble French prisoners, the prince of Wales proposed that Du Guesclin should name his own ransom, according to the etiquette of the times, adding, that whatever sum he mentioned, be it small or great, should set him free.

The valiant Breton valued himself at a hundred thousand crowns; the prince of Wales started at the immense sum, and asked Sir Bertrand "how he could ever expect to raise such an enormous ransom?"

"I know," replied the hero, "a hundred knights in my native Bretagne, who would mortgage their last acre rather than Du Guesclin should either languish in captivity, or be rated below his value. Yea, and there is not a woman in France now toiling at her distaff, who would not devote a year's earnings to set me free, for

[1] Philip le Hardi, duke of Burgundy; he was a prince of great integrity, and always faithful to his unfortunate brother, Charles VI.—*Giffard.*

well have I deserved of their sex. And if all the fair spinners in France employ their hands to redeem me, think you, prince, whether I shall bide much longer with you?"

Queen Philippa, who had listened with great attention to the discussion between her son and his prisoner, now spoke[1]—

"I name," she said, "fifty thousand crowns, my son, as my contribution towards your gallant prisoner's ransom; for though an enemy to my husband, a knight who is famed for the courteous protection he has afforded to my sex deserves the assistance of every woman."

Du Guesclin immediately threw himself at the feet of the generous queen, saying,

"Ah, lady, being the ugliest knight in France, I never reckoned on any goodness from your sex, excepting from those whom I had aided or protected by my sword, but your bounty will make me think less despicably of myself."

Philippa, as is usual in the brightest specimens of female excellence, was the friend of her own sex, and honoured those men most who paid the greatest reverence to women.

The most glorious festival ever known in England was that held at Windsor in the commencement of the year 1358, for the diversion of the two royal prisoners, John king of France, and David Bruce of Scotland. The Round Tower at Windsor, despite of the heavy expenses of war, was completed on purpose that the feast called

[1] Giffard attributes this beautiful anecdote to Joanna, the wife of the Black Prince, and places the incident after the battle of Navarrête. We follow the authority of St. Pelaye, in his History of Chivalry, supported by several French historians. It is the subject of a spirited Breton ballad romance.

the Round Table of the Knights of the Garter might be held within it. The captive Majesties of France and Scotland were invited to that feast as guests, and sat one on each side of Edward III. King John and King David tilted at the lists.[1] The interest of the ceremony was further enhanced by the fatal accident which befel the stout earl of Salisbury, who was killed in one of the encounters at the lists. Report says that King John of France was still more captivated with the beauty of Lady Salisbury than King Edward had been, and as hopelessly, for that fair and virtuous woman retired into the deepest seclusion after the calamitous death of her lord.[2] After the Windsor festival, Edward placed King John in an irksome captivity, and prepared for the re-invasion of France.

Queen Philippa embarked with her husband for the new campaign on the 29th of October, 1359. All her sons were with the army excepting the little prince Thomas of Woodstock, who, at the redoubtable age of five years old, was left guardian of the kingdom,[3] and represented the majesty of his father's person by sitting on the throne when parliaments were held.

After Edward had marched through France without resistance, and (if the truth must be spoken) desolating, as he went, a bleeding and suffering country in a most ungenerous manner, his career was stopped, as he was hastening to lay siege to Paris, by the hand of God itself. One of those dreadful thunder-storms which at

1 Our young queen is in possession of two trophies of the triumphs of her great ancestors, Philippa and Edward, which are at the same time memorials of this high festival of the Round Table at Windsor; these are the suits of armour worn by King John and King David on that occasion.

2 Dugdale. Milles.

3 Fœdera, vol. vi.

distant cycles pass over the continent of France,[1] literally attacked the invading army within two leagues of Chartres, and wreaked its utmost fury on the proud chivalry of England. Six thousand of Edward's finest horses and one thousand of his bravest cavaliers, among whom were the heirs of Warwick and Morley, were struck dead before him. The guilty ambition of Edward smote his conscience; he knelt down on the spot, and spreading his hands towards the church of Our Lady of Chartres, vowed to stop the effusion of blood, and make peace on the spot with France. His queen, who wished well for the noble-minded king of France, held him to his resolution, and a peace containing tolerable articles for France was concluded at Bretigny. The queen, King Edward, and the royal family, returned, and landed at Rye, 18th of May, ten days after the peace.

After the triumph of Poictiers the king and queen no longer opposed the union of the prince of Wales with Joanna the Fair,[2] although that princess was four years older that Edward and her character and disposition were far from meeting the approval of the queen. Edward and Joanna were married in the queen's presence at Windsor Chapel, October 10, 1361. After

[1] It was considered that the accounts of this storm had been greatly exaggerated by the chroniclers till that still more dreadful one ravaged France in 1790, and hastened, by the famine it brought, the French revolution.

[2] Joanna married the prince a few months after the death of her first husband. Besides their nearness of kin, other impediments existed to their union; the prince had formed a still stronger relationship with his cousin, according to the laws of the Catholic church, by becoming sponsor to her two boys, and holding them in his arms at the baptismal font; and, above all, the divorce of Joanna from the earl of Salisbury was not considered legal. All these impediments were legalised by a bull obtained some time after this marriage.—*Rymer's Fœdera.*

this marriage King Edward invested his son with the duchy of Aquitaine, and he departed with his bride in an evil hour to govern that territory. Froissart, speaking of the farewell visit of the queen, says,

"I, John Froissart, author of these chronicles, was in the service of Queen Philippa when she accompanied King Edward and the royal family to Berkhamstead Castle, to take leave of the prince and princess of Wales on their departure for Aquitaine. I was at that time twenty-four years old, and one of the clerks of the chamber to my lady the queen. During this visit, as I was seated on a bench, I heard an ancient knight expounding some of the prophecies of Merlin to the queen's ladies. According to him, neither the Prince of Wales nor the duke of Clarence, though sons to King Edward, will wear the crown of England, but it will fall to the house of Lancaster."

This gives a specimen of the conversation with which maids of honour in the reign of Queen Philippa were entertained, not with scandal or fashions, but with the best endeavours of an ancient knight to tell a fortune, or peep into futurity, by the assistance of the wizard Merlin.

King John, soon after the peace took leave of the queen for the purpose of returning to France, that he might arrange for the payment of his ransom: he sent to England the young Lord de Courcy, count of Soissons, as one of the hostages for its liquidation. During the sojourn of De Courcy in England, he won the heart of the Lady Isabella, the eldest daughter of Edward and Philippa. After remaining some time in France, and finding it impossible to fulfil his engagements, King John returned to his captivity, and redeemed his parole and his hostages with this noble sentiment: "If

honour were lost elsewhere upon earth, it ought to be found in the conduct of kings." Froissart thus describes the return of this heroic, but unfortunate sovereign.

"News was brought to the king, who was at that time with Queen Philippa at Eltham, (a very magnificent palace the English kings have seven miles from London,) that the captive king had landed at Dover. This was in 1364, the 1st of January. King Edward sent off a grand deputation, saying how much the queen and he were rejoiced to see him in England, and this, it may be supposed, all things considered, King John readily believed. King John offered at the shrine of Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury, on his journey, and taking the road to London he arrived at Eltham, where Queen Philippa and King Edward were ready to receive him. It was on a Sunday in the afternoon: there were, between that time and supper, many grand dances and carols, at which it seems the young Lord de Courcy distinguished himself by singing and dancing. I can never relate how very honourably the king and queen behaved to King John at Eltham. They afterwards lodged him with great pomp in the palace of the Savoy, where he visited King Edward at Westminster, whenever he had a mind to see him or the queen, taking boat, and coming from Savoy Stairs by water to the palace." But King John's health was declining, and he died at the Savoy Palace the same year.[1]

A marriage soon after took place between the elegant De Courcy and the princess royal. Although an emperor's grandson, this nobleman could scarcely be considered a match for the daughter of Edward III.; but

[1] Knowing his end approaching, King John had certainly surrendered his person, in hopes of saving his country the expense of his ransom.

since the escape of her faithless betrothed, the count of Flanders, Isabella had entered into no marriage contract, and was at the time of her nuptials turned of thirty. On occasion of the marriage festivals, King Edward presented his queen with two rich corsets, one embroidered with the words *Myn biddinye*, and the other with her motto, *Iche wrude muche*.[1] Prince Lionel at this time espoused the ward of Queen Philippa, Elizabeth de Burgh, who brought as dower at least one-third of Ireland, with the mighty inheritance of the Clares, earls of Gloucester. Edward III. afterwards created Lionel Duke of Clarence.

This prince, through whose daughter, married to Edmund Mortimer, the line of York derived their right of primogeniture, was a handsome and courageous Flemish giant, mild-tempered and amiable, as persons of great strength and stature, by a beneficent law of nature, usually are. Lionel is rather an obscure though important person in English history: here is his portrait by the last of our rhyming chroniclers:

> "In all the world there was no prince him like,
> Of high stature and of all seemliness
> Above all men within the whole king*rike* (kingdom),
> By the shoulders might be seen doubtless,
> In hall was he maid-like for gentleness,
> In other places famed for rhetoric,
> But in the field a lion MARMORIKE."

Death soon dissolved the wedlock of Elizabeth de Burgh. She died, leaving a daughter but a few days old. This motherless babe the Queen Philippa adopted for her own, and became sponsor to her little granddaughter with the countess of Warwick, as we

[1] We owe this curious fact to Sir Harris Nicolas's excellent work on the Order of the Garter.

learn from the Friar's Genealogy, when mentioning Lionel of Clarence.

> "His wife was dead and at Clare buried,
> And no heir had he but his daughter faire,
> Philippe, that hight as chronicles specified,
> Whom Queen Philippe christened for his heir,
> The archbishop of York for her compeer;
> Her godmother also was of Warwick countess;
> A lady likewise of great worthiness."

John of Gaunt, the third surviving son of Philippa, married Blanche, the heiress of Lancaster; the Princess Mary was wedded to the duke of Bretagne, but died early in life. Edmund Langley, earl of Cambridge, afterwards duke of York, married Isabella of Castile, whose sister, his brother John of Gaunt took for his second wife. The youngest prince, Thomas of Woodstock, afterwards created duke of Gloucester, married an English lady, the co-heiress of Humphrey de Bohun, constable of England. Margaret, the fifth daughter of Edward III., was given in marriage to the earl of Pembroke; she was one of the most learned ladies of her age, and a distinguished patroness of Chaucer.

Notwithstanding their great strength and commanding stature, scarcely one of the sons of Philippa reached old age; even "John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," was only fifty-nine at his demise: the premature introduction to the cares of state, the weight of plate armour, and the violent exercise in the tilt-yard, by way of relaxation from the severer toils of partisan warfare, seem to have brought early old age on this gallant brotherhood of princes. The queen had been the mother of twelve children; eight survived her.

Every one of the sons of Philippa were famous champions in the field. The Black Prince and John

of Gaunt[1] were learned, elegant, and brilliant, and strongly partook of the genius of Edward I. and the Provençal Plantagenets.

Lionel and Edmund were good-natured and brave. They were comely in features, and gigantic in stature; they possessed no great vigour of intellect, and were both rather addicted to the pleasures of the table.

Thomas of Woodstock was fierce, petulant, and rapacious; he possessed, however, considerable accomplishments, and is reckoned among royal and noble authors: he wrote a history of the laws of battle, which is perspicuous in style; he was the great patron of Gower the poet, who belonged originally to the household of this prince.

The queen saw the promise of a successor to the throne of England in the progeny of her best-beloved son Edward. Her grandson Richard was born at Bourdeaux before she succumbed to her fatal malady.

Philippa had not the misery of living to see the change in the prosperity of her family, to witness the long pining decay of the heroic prince of Wales, the grievous change in his health and disposition, or the imbecility that gradually took possession of the once mighty mind of her husband. Before these reverses took place the queen was seized with a dropsical malady, under which she languished about two years. All her sons were absent on the continent when her death approached, excepting her youngest, Thomas of

[1] Philippa, in conjunction with her son John Duke of Lancaster, warmly patronised Chaucer. With this queen, the court favour of the father of English verse expired. He was neglected by Richard II. and his queen, as all his memoirs will testify. Nor did the union of his wife's sister with the Duke of Lancaster draw him from his retirement.

Woodstock. The Black Prince had just concluded his Spanish campaign, and was ill in Gascony. Lionel of Clarence was at the point of death in Italy; the queen's secretary, Froissart, had accompanied that prince when he went to be married to Violante of Milan. On the return of Froissart, he found his royal mistress was dead, and he thus describes her deathbed, from the detail of those who were present and heard her last words.

"I must now speak[1] of the death of the most courteous, liberal, and noble lady that ever reigned in her time, the Lady Philippa of Hainault, queen of England. While her son, the duke of Lancaster, was encamped in the valley of Tourneham, ready to give battle to the duke of Burgundy, this death happened in England, to the infinite misfortune of King Edward, his children, and the whole kingdom. That excellent lady the queen, who had done so much good, aiding all knights, ladies, and damsels, when distressed, who had applied to her, lay at this time dangerously sick at Windsor Castle, and every day her disorder increased.

"When the good queen perceived that her end approached, she called to the king, and extending her right hand from under the bedclothes, put it into the right hand of King Edward, who was oppressed with sorrow, and thus spoke—

"'We have, my husband, enjoyed our long union in happiness, peace, and prosperity. But I entreat, before I depart, and we are for ever separated in this world, that you will grant me three requests.'

"King Edward, with sighs and tears, replied—

[1] Froissart, vol. iv. p. 20. Froissart wrote an elegy in verse on the death of his patroness, Queen Philippa, which has not been preserved.

"'Lady, name them; whatever be your requests, they shall be granted.'

"'My lord,' she said, 'I beg you will fulfil whatever engagements I have entered into with merchants for their wares, as well on this as on the other side of the sea; I beseech you to fulfil whatever gifts or legacies I have made, or left to churches wherein I have paid my devotions, and to all my servants, whether male or female; and when it shall please God to call you hence, you will choose no other sepulchre than mine, and that you will lie by my side in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.'

"The king in tears replied, 'Lady, all this shall be done.'

"Soon after the good lady made the sign of the cross on her breast, and having recommended to the king her youngest son Thomas, who was present, praying to God, she gave up her spirit, which I firmly believe was caught by holy angels, and carried to the glory of heaven, for she had never done anything by thought or deed to endanger her soul.

"Thus died this admirable Queen of England, in the year of grace 1369, the vigil of the Assumption of the Virgin, the 14th of August.

"Information of this heavy loss was carried to the English army at Tourneham, which greatly afflicted every one, more especially her son John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster."

Philippa's words were not complied with to the letter; her grave is not by her husband's side, at Westminster Abbey, but at his feet. Her statue in alabaster is placed on the monument.[1]

[1] Stow gives names to the numerous images which surround the tomb, on the authority of an old MS. At the feet are the king of Navarre, the

Skelton's translation of her Latin epitaph, hung on a tablet close by her tomb, is as follows: —

" Faire Philippe, William Hainault's child, and younger daughter deare,
Of roseate hue and beauty bright, in tomb lies hilled here;
King Edward through his mother's will and nobles' good consent,
Took her to wife, and joyfully with her his time he spent.
Her brother John, a martial man, and eke a valiant knight,
Did link this woman to this king in bonds of marriage bright.
This match and marriage thus in blood did bind the Flemings sure
To Englishmen, by which they did the Frenchmen's wreck procure.
This Philippe, dowered in gifts full rare, and treasures of the mind,
In beauty bright, religion, faith, to all and each most kind,
A fruitful mother Philippe was, full many a son she bred,
And brought forth many a worthy knight, hardy and full of dread;
A careful nurse to students all, at Oxford she did found
Queen's college, and dame Pallas school, that did her fame resound.
The wife of Edward dear,
Queen Philippe lieth here.
Learn to live."

Truth obliges us to divest Queen Philippa of one good deed, which was in fact out of her power to perform; she is generally considered to be the first foundress of the magnificent Queen's College at Oxford. It was founded, indeed, by her chaplain, that noble character Robert de Eglesfield,[1] who, with modesty equal to his learning and merits, placed it under the protection of his royal mistress, and called it her foundation, and the College of the Queen.

king of Bohemia, the king of Scots, the king of Spain, and the king of Sicily. At the head William earl of Hainault, Philippa's father; John, king of France, her uncle's son; Edward III., her husband; the Emperor her brother-in-law; and Edward prince of Wales, her son. On the left side are Joanna, queen of Scots, her sister-in-law; John, earl of Cornwall, her brother-in law; Joanna, princess of Wales, her daughter-in-law, and the duchesses of Clarence and Lancaster; the princess Isabella, and the princes Lionel, John, Edmund, and Thomas. On the right side of the tomb may be seen her mother, her brother and his wife, her nephew Louis of Bavaria, her uncle John of Hainault, her daughters Mary and Margaret, and Charles duke of Brabant.

[1] History of the University of Oxford.

Philippa herself, the consort of a monarch perpetually engaged in foreign war, and the mother of a large family, contributed but a mite towards this splendid foundation: this was a yearly rent of twenty marks, to the sustenance of six scholar-chaplains, to be paid by her receiver. Queen Philippa's principal charitable donation was to the Hospital of the Nuns of St. Katharine by the Tower. She likewise left donations to the canons of the new chapel of St. Stephen, which Edward III. had lately built as the domestic place of worship to Westminster Palace.

The only shade of unpopularity ever cast on the conduct of Philippa was owing to the rapacity of her purveyors, after her children grew up. The royal family was numerous, and the revenues, impoverished by constant war, were very slender, and therefore every absolute due was enforced from tenants of the crown by the purveyors of the royal household.[1]

[1] These tormenting adjuncts to feudality used to help themselves to twenty-five quarters of corn, instead of twenty, by taking heap, instead of strike, measure, and were guilty of many instances of oppression in the queen's name. Archbishop Islip wrote to Edward III. a most pathetic letter on the rapacity of the royal purveyors. He says, "the king ought to make a law enforcing honest payment for all goods needed by his household." Then, continues he, "all men will bring necessaries to your gate, as they did in the time of Henry, your great grandfather, at whose approach all men rejoiced." He declares, "that he, the archbishop himself, trembles at hearing the king's horn, whether he haps to be in his house or at mass; when one of the king's servants knocks at the gate, he trembles more, when he comes to the door still more, and this terror continues as long as the king stays, on account of the various evils done to the poor. He thinks the king's harbingers come not on behalf of God, but of the devil. When the horn is heard every one trembles, and when the harbinger arrives, instead of saying 'Fear not,' as the good angel did—he cries, 'He must have oats, and he must have hay, and he must have straw, and litter for the king's horses.' A second comes in, and he must have geese and hens, and many other things. A third is at his heels, and he must have bread

The damsels of the queen's bedchamber were pensioned by King Edward after her death, according to her request. He charges his exchequer to pay during the terms of their separate lives, on account of their good and faithful services to Philippa, late queen of England; first to the beloved damsel Alicia de Preston,[1] ten marks yearly at Pasche and Michaelmas; likewise to Matilda Fisher, to Elizabeth Pershore, to Johanna Kawley, ten marks yearly; to Johanna Cosin, to Philippa the Pycard,[2] and to Agatha Liergin, a hundred shillings yearly; and to Matilda Radscroft and Agnes de Saxilby, five marks yearly.

The name of Alice Perrers does not appear on this list of beloved damsels, but a little further on, in the Fœdera occurs a well-known and disgraceful grant. "Know all, that we give and concede to our beloved Alicia Perrers, late damsel of the chamber to our dearest consort Philippa deceased, and to her heirs and executors, all the jewels, goods, and chattels that the said queen left in the hands of Euphemia, who was wife to Walter de Heselarton, knight, and the said Euphemia is to deliver them to the said Alicia on receipt of this our order."

It is to be feared that the king's attachment to this woman had begun during Philippa's lingering illness, for in 1368 she obtained a gift of a manor that had be-

and meat. He prays the king not to delay till the morrow the remedy for these evils, which were only during the years of the king's father and grandfather; that it is contrary to all laws, divine and human, and on account of it many souls are now in hell."—*Archæologia.*

[1] Fœdera, vol. vi. p. 648.

[2] Supposed to be Chaucer's wife. She was sister to Catherine Roet, the third wife of John of Gaunt. Her father was an attendant on Philippa, and employed in Guienne. He was from the borders of Picardy; hence the appellation of his daughter.

longed to the king's aunt, and in the course of 1369 she was enriched by the grant of several manors.[1]

But we will not pursue this subject; we are not obliged to trace the events of the dotage and folly of the once great Edward, or show the absurdity of which he was guilty, when he made the infamous Alice Perrers the queen's successor in his affections.

During his youth, and the brilliant maturity of his life, Philippa's royal partner was worthy of the intense and faithful love she bore him. According to this portrait Edward was not only a king, but a king among men, highly gifted in mind, person, and genius.

"Edward III. was just six feet in stature, exactly shaped, and strongly made; his limbs beautifully turned, his face and nose somewhat long and high, but exceedingly comely; his eyes sparkling like fire, his looks manly, and his air and movements most majestic. He was well versed in law, history, and the divinity of the times; he understood and spoke readily Latin, French, Spanish, and German."

Whilst the court was distracted with the factions which succeeded the death of the Black Prince, when John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, was suspected of aiming at the crown, a most extraordinary story was circulated in England, relating to a confession supposed to be made by Queen Philippa, on her deathbed, to William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester.

"That John of Gaunt was neither the son of Philippa nor Edward III., but a porter's son of Ghent, for the queen told him that she brought forth not a

[1] Brayley and Britton's Westminster. They on very good grounds suppose that Alice had two daughters by the king, for whom these excessive grants were to provide.

son but a daughter at Ghent, that she overlaid and killed the little princess by accident, and dreading the wrath of King Edward for the death of his infant, she persuaded the porter's wife, a Flemish woman, to change her living son, who was born at the same time, for the dead princess; and so the queen nourished and brought up the man now called Duke of Lancaster, which she bare not; and all these things did the queen on her deathbed declare in confession to Bishop Wykeham, and earnestly prayed him that if ever it chanceth this son of the Flemish porter affecteth the kingdom, he will make his stock and lineage known to the world, lest a false heir should inherit the throne of England."[1]

The inventor of this story did not remember, that of all the sons of Philippa, John of Gaunt most resembled his royal sire in the high majestic lineaments and piercing eyes, which spoke the descent of the Plantagenets from southern Europe. The portraits of Edward III., of the elegant Black Prince,[2] and of John of Gaunt, are all marked with as strong an air of individuality, as if they had been painted by the accurate Holbein.[3]

[1] Archbishop Parker's Ecclesiastical History and a Latin Chronicle of the reign of Edward III., printed in the Archæologia. Some slur had been cast on the legitimacy of Richard the Second by the Lancasterian party. John of Gaunt was then a decided partizan of Wickliffe, and this story seems raised by the opposite party for the purpose of undermining his influence with the common people.

[2] Pere Orleans affirms that the prince of Wales, just before the battle of Poictiers was generally called the Black Prince, because he wore black armour in order to set off the fairness of his complexion, and so to improve his *bonne mine*. It is to be noted that Froissart never calls him the Black Prince.

[3] See the beautiful engravings from originals, in Carte's folio History of England, vol. ii.

The close observer of history will not fail to notice that with the life of Queen Philippa, the happiness, the good fortune, and even the respectability of Edward III. and his family departed, and scenes of strife, sorrow, and folly, distracted the court, where she had once promoted virtue, justice, and well-regulated munificence.

ANNE OF BOHEMIA,

SURNAMED THE GOOD.

FIRST QUEEN OF RICHARD II.

Descent of Anne of Bohemia—Letter of the Empress Elizabeth—Anne of Bohemia betrothed — Sets out for England — Detained at Brabant — Dangers by land and sea—Lands in England—Her progress to London—Pageants at reception—Marriage and coronation—Queen's fashions and improvements—Queen favourable to the Reformation—King's campaign in the north—Queen's knight murdered—King's brother condemned—Death of the princess of Wales—The queen's favourite maid of honour—Executions of the queen's servants—Queen pleads for their lives—Grand tournament—Queen presides—Queen intercedes for the city of London—Her visit to the city—Gifts to her—Her entrance at Westminster Hall—Her prayer to the king—Richard grants her request—Queen's sudden death—King's frantic grief—His summons to the burial—Monument—Inscription—Goodness of the queen.

THE ancestors of the princess Anne of Bohemia originated from the same country as the Flemish Philippa; she was the nearest relative to that beloved queen whose hand was attainable, and by means of her uncle, Duke Winceslaus of Brabant, she brought the same popular and profitable commercial alliance to England.

Anne of Bohemia was the eldest daughter of the Emperor Charles IV., by his fourth wife, Elizabeth of Pomerania;[1] she was born about 1367, at Prague in Bohemia. The regency who governed England during

[1] The mother of Anne was the daughter of Boleslaus, duke of Pomerania, and granddaughter to Casimir the Great, king of Poland. The

King Richard II.'s minority, demanded her hand for their young king just before her father died in the year 1380.

On the arrival of the English ambassador, Sir Simon Burley, at Prague, the imperial court took measures which seem not a little extraordinary at the present day. England was to Bohemia a sort of terra incognita; and as a general knowledge of geography and statistics was certainly not among the list of imperial accomplishments in the fourteenth century, the empress despatched Duke Primislaus, of Saxony, on a voyage of discovery, to ascertain, for the satisfaction of herself and the princess, what sort of country England might be.

Whatever were the particulars of the duke's discoveries, (and his homeward despatches must have been of a most curious nature,) it appears he kept a scrutinizing eye in regard to pecuniary interest. His report seems to have been on the whole satisfactory, since in the Fœdera we find a letter from the imperial widow of Charles IV., to the effect "that I, Elizabeth, Roman empress, always Augusta, likewise queen of Bo-

Empress Elizabeth received on her marriage day a noble dowry, the gift of her royal grandsire of Poland, amounting to 100,000 florins of gold. Elizabeth espoused the Emperor Charles in 1363; the year afterwards she became the mother of Sigismund, afterwards Emperor of Germany, who was brother, both by father and mother, to Queen Anne.

The Emperor Charles IV., of the line of Luxembourg, was son of the blind king of Bohemia, well known to the readers of our chivalric annals. Though bereft of his sight, the king of Bohemia would be led by his knights, one at each side of his bridle, into the *mêlée* at the gallant fight of Cressy, where, as he said, "he struck good strokes more than one," for his brother-in-law, Philip of Valois. After "charging with all his chivalry" in a tremendous line, with his battle-steed linked by chains to the saddles of his knights, the blind hero perished in this desperate attempt to redeem the "fortune of France." The motto of this brave man and the ostrich plumes of his crest were assumed by the young victor, our Black Prince, as the proudest trophies of that glorious day. Such was the grandsire of Anne of Bohemia.

hemia, empower duke Primislaus to treat with Richard, king of England, concerning the wedlock of that excellent virgin, the damsel Anne, born of us, and in our name to order and dispose, and as if our own soul were pledged, to swear to the fulfilment of every engagement."

When the Duke of Saxony returned to Germany, he carried presents of jewels from the king of England to the ladies who had the care of the princess's education.[1]

"The Duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, would willingly have seen the king his nephew married to his daughter, whom he had by the Lady Blanche of Lancaster; but it was thought that the young lady was too nearly related, being the king's cousin-german. Sir Simon Burley, a sage and valiant knight, who had been King Richard's tutor, and had been much beloved by the prince of Wales, his father, was deputed to go to Germany respecting the marriage with the emperor's sister. The Duke and Duchess of Brabant, from the love they bore the king of England, received his envoy most courteously, and said it would be a good match for their niece. But the marriage was not immediately concluded, for the damsel was young; added to this, there shortly happened in England great misery and tribulation,"[2] by the calamitous insurrection of Wat Tyler.

Richard II. was the sole surviving offspring of the gallant Black Prince and Joanna of Kent. Born in the luxurious south, the first accents of Richard of Bourdeaux were formed in the poetical language of Provence, and his infant tastes linked to music and song—tastes which assimilated ill with the manners of his own

[1] Froissart. The Duke of Techsen and duke of Saxony are the same person.

[2] Froissart.

court and people. His mother and half-brothers, after the death of his princely father, had brought up the future king of England with the most ruinous personal indulgence and unconstitutional ideas of his own infallibility. He had inherited more of his mother's levity than his father's strength of character; yet the domestic affections of Richard were of the most vivid and enduring nature, especially towards the females of his family; and the state of distress and terror to which he saw his mother reduced by the insolence of Wat Tyler's mob, was the chief stimulant of his gallant behaviour when that rebel fell beneath the sword of Walworth.

When these troubles were suppressed, time had obviated the objection to the union of Richard and Anne. The young princess had attained her fifteenth year, and was considered capable of giving a rational consent to her own marriage; and after sending a letter to the council of England, saying, she became the wife of their king with full and free will, "she set out," says Froissart, "on her perilous journey, attended by the duke of Saxony and his duchess, who was her aunt, and with a suitable number of knights and damsels. They came through Brabant to Brussels, where the Duke Wenceslaus and his duchess received the young queen, and her company, very grandly. The Lady Anne remained with her uncle and aunt more than a month; she was afraid of proceeding, for she had been informed there were twelve large armed vessels full of Normans on the sea between Calais and Holland, that seized and pillaged all that fell in their hands, without any respect to persons. The report was current, that they cruised in those seas, awaiting the coming of the king of England's bride, because the king of France and his council were very uneasy at Richard's German alliance, and were desirous of breaking the match."

"Detained by these apprehensions, the betrothed queen remained at Brussels more than a month, till the Duke of Brabant, her uncle, sent the lords of Rousselans and Bousquehoir to remonstrate with King Charles V., who was also the near relative of Anne.

"Upon which King Charles remanded the Norman cruisers into port, but he declared that he granted this favour solely out of love to his cousin Anne, and out of no regard or consideration for the king of England. The duke and duchess were very much pleased, and so were all those about to cross the sea. The royal bride took leave of her uncle and aunt, and departed for Brussels."

"Duke Wencaslaus had the princess escorted with one hundred spears. She passed through Bruges, where the earl of Flanders received her very magnificently, and entertained her for three days. She then set out for Gravelines, where the earl of Salisbury waited for her with five hundred spears and as many archers. This noble escort conducted her in triumph to Calais, which belonged to her betrothed lord. Then the Brabant spearmen took their departure, after seeing her safely delivered to the English governor."

"The lady Anne staid at Calais only till the wind became favourable. She embarked on a Wednesday morning, and the same day arrived at Dover, where she tarried to repose herself two days."

The young bride had need of some interval to compose herself, after her narrow escape from destruction. All our native historians notice the following strange fact, which must have originated in a tremendous ground-swell. "Scarcely," says the chronicler,[1] "had the Bohemian princess set her foot on the shore, when a sudden convulsion of the sea took place, unaccom-

[1] Quoted by Milles.

panied with wind, and unlike any winter storm; but the water was so violently shaken and troubled, and put in such furious commotion, that the ship in which the young queen's person was conveyed, was very terribly rent in pieces before her very face, and the rest of the vessels that rode in company were tossed so that it astonied all beholders."

The English parliament was sitting, when intelligence came that the king's bride, after all the difficulties and dangers of her progress from Prague, had safely arrived at Dover, on which it was prorogued; but first, funds were appointed, that with all honour the bride might be presented to the young king.

On the third day after her arrival, the Lady Anne set forth on her progress to Canterbury, where she was met by the king's uncle Thomas, who received her with the utmost reverence and honour. When she approached the Blackheath, the lord mayor and citizens in splendid dresses greeted her, and with all the ladies and damsels, both from town and country, joined her cavalcade, making so grand an entry into London, that the like had scarcely ever been seen. The Goldsmiths' company (seven score of the men of this rich guild) splendidly arrayed themselves to meet, as they said, the 'Cæsar's sister;' nor was their munificence confined to their own persons; they further put themselves to the expense of sixty shillings for the hire of seven minstrels, with foil on their hats and chaperons, and expensive vestures, to do honour to the imperial bride; and to two shillings further expense, "for potations for the said minstrels."[1] At the upper end of Chepe was a pageant of a castle with towers, from two sides of which ran fountains of wine. From these towers

[1] Herbert's History of the City Companies.

beautiful damsels blew in the faces of the king and queen gold leaf; this was thought a device of extreme elegance and ingenuity; they likewise threw counterfeit gold florins before the horses' feet of the royal party.

Anne of Bohemia was married to Richard II. in the chapel royal of the palace of Westminster, the newly erected structure of St. Stephen. "On the wedding-day, which was the twentieth after Christmas, there were," says Froissart, "mighty feastings. That gallant and noble knight, Sir Robert Namur, accompanied the queen from the time when she quitted Prague till she was married. The king at the end of the week carried his queen to Windsor, where he kept open and royal house. They were very happy together. She was accompanied by the king's mother, the princess of Wales, and her daughter, the duchess of Bretagne, half sister to King Richard, who was then in England soliciting for the restitution of the earldom of Richmond, which had been taken from her husband by the English regency, and settled in part of dower on Queen Anne. Some days after the marriage of the royal pair, they returned to London, and the coronation of the queen was performed most magnificently. At the young queen's earnest request, a general pardon was granted by the king at her consecration."[1] The afflicted people stood in need of this respite, as the executions since Tyler's insurrection had been bloody and barbarous beyond all precedent. The land was reeking with the blood of the unhappy peasantry, when the humane intercession of the gentle Anne of Bohemia put a stop to the executions.

This mediation obtained for Richard's bride the title of "the good queen Anne;" and years, instead of impairing the popularity, usually so evanescent in England,

[1] Tyrrell. Walsingham. Rymer.

only increased the esteem felt by her subjects for this beneficent princess.

Grand tournaments were held directly after the coronation; many days were spent in these solemnities, wherein the German nobles, who had accompanied the queen to England, displayed their chivalry to the great delight of the English. Our chroniclers call Anne of Bohemia "the beauteous queen." At fifteen or sixteen, a blooming German girl is a very pleasing object, but her beauty must have been limited to complexion, for the features of her statue are homely and undignified; a narrow, high-pointed forehead, full cheeks, a long upper lip, and lamp-shaped face, with no expression excepting good temper, are scarcely entitled to claim a reputation for beauty. But the head-dress she wore must have neutralised the defects of her face in some degree, by giving an appearance of breadth to her narrow forehead. This was the horned cap which constituted the head-gear of the ladies of Bohemia and Hungary, and in this "moony tire" did the bride of Richard present herself to the astonished eyes of her female subjects.[1]

Queen Anne made some atonement for being the importer of these hideous fashions by introducing the use of pins, such as are used at our present toilets. Our chroniclers declare that previously to her arrival in England, the English fair fastened their robes with skewers,

[1] This cap was at least two feet in height, and as many in width; its fabric was built of wire and pasteboard, like a very wide-spreading mitre, and over these horns was extended some glittering tissue or gauze. Monstrous and outrageous were the horned caps that reared their heads in England, directly the royal bride appeared in one; these formidable novelties expanded their wings on every side, till at church or procession the diminished heads of lords and knights were eclipsed by their ambitious partners. The church declared they were the "moony tire" denounced by Ezekiel; likely enough, for they had been introduced by Bohemian crusaders from Syria.

a great misrepresentation; for even as early as the Roman empire, the use of pins was known, and British barrows have been opened wherein were found numbers of very neat and efficient little ivory pins, which had been used in arranging the grave-clothes of the dead; and can these irreverent chroniclers suppose that English ladies used worse fastenings for their robes in the fourteenth century?

Side-saddles were the third new fashion brought into England by Anne of Bohemia: they were different from those used at present, which were invented or first adopted by Catherine de Medicis, queen of France: the side-saddle of Anne of Bohemia was like a bench with a hanging step, where both feet were placed: this mode of riding required a footman or squire at the bridle-rein of a lady's palfrey, and was chiefly used in processions.

According to the fashion of the age, the young queen had a device which all her knights were expected to wear at tournaments: but her device was, we think, a very stupid one, being an ostrich with a bit of iron in his mouth.[1]

At the celebration of the festival of the Order of the Garter, 1384, Queen Anne wore a robe of violet cloth dyed in grain, the hood lined with scarlet, the robe lined with fur. She was attended by a number of noble ladies, who are mentioned "as newly received into the Society of the Garter." They were habited in the same costume as their young queen.[2]

The royal spouse of Anne was remarkable for the

[1] Camden's Remains. It is possible this was not a device, but an armorial bearing, and had some connexion with the ostrich plume the Black Prince took from her grandfather at Cressy. The dukes of Austria are perpetually called dukes of *Ostrich* by the English writers, as late as Speed. Has this term any punning connexion with this device and the Bohemian crest of ostrich feathers?

[2] See Sir Harris Nicolas, History of the Order of the Garter.

foppery of his dress; he had one coat estimated at thirty thousand marks. Its chief value must have arisen from the precious stones with which it was adorned. This was called apparel "broidered of stone."[1]

Notwithstanding the great accession of luxury that followed this marriage, the daughter of the Cæsars, (as Richard proudly called his bride,) not only came portionless to the English throne matrimonial, but her husband had to pay a very handsome sum for the honour of calling her his own; he paid to her brother 10,000 marks for the imperial alliance, besides being at the whole charge of her journey. The jewels of the duchy of Aquitaine, the floriated coronet, and many brooches in the form of animals, were pawned to the Londoners in order to raise money for the expenses of the bridal.

To Anne of Bohemia is attributed the honour of being the first in that illustrious band of princesses who were the nursing mothers of the Reformation;[2] the Protestant church inscribes her name at the commencement of the illustrious list in which are seen those of Anne Boleyn, Katharine Parr, Lady Jane Gray, and Queen Elizabeth. Whether the young queen brought those principles with her or imbibed them from her mother-in-law the princess of Wales, it is not easy to ascertain. A passage quoted by Huss the Bohemian reformer leads to the inference

[1] In this reign the shoes were worn with pointed toes of an absurd and inconvenient length. Camden quotes an amusing passage from a quaint work, entitled Eulogium on the Extravagance of the Fashions of this Reign. "Their shoes and pattens are snowted and piked up more than a finger long, which they call Cracowes, resembling the devil's claws, which were fastened to the knees with chains of gold and silver, and thus were *they* garmented which were lyons in the hall, and hares in the field."

[2] Fox the martyrologist declares, that the Bohemians who attended Queen Anne first introduced the works of Wickliffe to John Huss. Count Valerian Krasinski, in his recent valuable history of the Reformation in Poland, confirms this assertion from the records of his country.

that Anne was used to read the scriptures in her native tongue. "It is possible," says Wickliffe, in his work called The 'Threefold Bond of Love,' "that our noble queen of England, sister of the Cæsar, may have the gospel written in three languages, Bohemian, German, and Latin, now, to hereticate her (brand her with heresy) on that account, would be Luciferian folly." The influence of Queen Anne over the mind of her young husband was certainly employed by Joanna princess of Wales[1] to aid her in saving the life of Wickliffe, when in great danger at the council of Lambeth in 1382.[2]

Joanna, princess of Wales, was a convert of Wickliffe, who had been introduced to her by his patron the duke of Lancaster. Joanna, aided by her daughter-in-law, swayed the ductile mind of King Richard to their wishes.[3]

Soon after, the queen was separated from her husband by a war in Scotland. The most remarkable incident of his campaign was the murder of Lord Stafford, by the king's half-brother John Holland. Jealousy of the queen's favour, and malice against her adherents, appear to be the secret motives of this deed. Stafford was a

[1] That Anne's mother-in-law was the active protectress of Wickliffe is apparent from Dr. Lingard's words, vol. iv. p. 189. "Some said that the two bishops were intimidated by a message from the princess of Wales; by Wycliffe himself, his escape was considered and celebrated as a triumph." Modern writers have usually attributed this good deed to Anne, but she was too young to do more than follow the lead of her mother-in-law. From Walsingham we find that several knights of the household were accused of Lollardism; from various authorities, we find Sir Simon Burley, Sir Lewis Clifford, Sir John Sturry, and Sir John Oldcastle, were, more or less, accused as disciples of the new doctrine.

[2] Wickliffe died in his bed at Lutterworth in 1384, and when darker times arose after the death of this beneficent queen, persecution found nought to vent its spite upon excepting the insensible bones of the "evil parson of Lutterworth," as he was called, when his remains were exhumed and cast into the brook which runs near his village.

[3] Life of Wickliffe, Biogra. Brit.

peerless chevalier, adored by the English army, and for his virtuous conduct in high favour with Anne of Bohemia, who called him her knight; and he was actually on his way to London with messages from the king to the queen, when this fatal encounter took place.[1] The ostensible cause of the murder likewise was connected with the queen; as we learn from Froissart, that the archers of Lord Stafford, when protecting Sir Meles, a Bohemian knight then with the army, who was a friend of Queen Anne, slew a favourite squire belonging to Sir John Holland, and to revenge a punishment which this man had brought upon himself, Sir John cut Lord Stafford down without any personal provocation. The grief of the Earl of Stafford, his entreaties for justice on the murderer of his son, and above all, the atrocious circumstances of the case, wrought on King Richard to vow that an exemplary act of justice should be performed on John Holland (brother though he might be) as soon as he ventured from the shrine of St. John of Beverley; whither the homicide had fled for sanctuary. In vain Joanna princess of Wales, the mutual mother of the king and murderer, pleaded with Richard, after his return from Scotland, that the life of Sir John might be spared. After four days' incessant lamentation, the king's mother died on the fifth day, at the royal castle of Wallingford. Richard's resolution failed him at this catastrophe, and when too late to save his mother, he pardoned the criminal. The aggrieved persons in this unhappy adventure were the friends of the queen; but there is no evidence that she excited her husband's wrath.[2] The homicide who had occasioned so much trouble departed on an atoning pilgrimage to Syria. He was absent from England during

[1] Speed and Froissart.

[2] Froissart.

the life of Queen Anne, and happy would it have been for his brother if he had never returned.

Anne of Bohemia, unlike Isabella of France, who was always at war with her husband's favourites and friends, made it a rule of life to love all that the king loved, and to consider a sedulous compliance with his will as her first duty. In one instance alone did this pliancy of temper lead her into the violation of justice; this was in the case of the repudiation of the countess of Oxford.

"There were great murmurings against the duke of Ireland," says Froissart; "but what injured him most was his conduct to his duchess, the Lady Philippa, daughter of the Lord de Courcy, a handsome and noble lady. For the duke was greatly enamoured with one of the queen's damsels called the landgravine.[1] She was a tolerably handsome, pleasant lady, whom Queen Anne had brought with her from Bohemia. The duke of Ireland loved her with such ardour that he was desirous of making her, if possible, his duchess by marriage. All the good people of England were much shocked at this, for his lawful wife was grand-daughter to the gallant King Edward and the excellent Queen Philippa, being the daughter of the princess Isabella. Her uncles, the dukes of Gloucester and York, were very wroth at this insult."

The first and last error of Anne of Bohemia was her participation in this disgraceful transaction, by which she was degraded in the eyes of subjects who had warmly

[1] Froissart gives this high title to this maid of honour, while the English chroniclers brand her with low birth. The Fœdera at once puts an end to these disputes by naming her the landgravissa or landgravine of Luxembourg, which shows not only that she was noble, but allied to the imperial family itself. The king gives a safe-conduct to this landgravissa to come to England with all her jewels, chamber furniture, and valuables sent by the empress for the use of his dearest queen, the empress having appointed the landgravissa her daughter's lady of the bedchamber.

admired her meek virtues. The offensive part taken by the queen in this transaction was, that she actually wrote with her own hand, an urgent letter to Pope Urban, persuading him to sanction the divorce of the countess of Oxford, and to authorize the marriage of her faithless lord with the landgravine. Whether the maid of honour were a princess or a peasant, she had no right to appropriate another lady's husband, and her royal mistress was scarcely less culpable in aiding and abetting so nefarious a measure, to the infinite injury of herself, and of the husband she so tenderly loved.

There was scarcely an earl in England who was not related to the royal family; the queen, by the part she took in this disgraceful affair, offended every one allied to the royal house of Plantagenet.[1]

The storm fell in its fury on the head of the unfortunate Sir Simon Burley, the same knight whom we have seen make two journeys to Prague in solemn embassy, regarding the queen's marriage. This unfortunate knight, who was the most accomplished man of his age, had been foredoomed by his persecutors. The earl of Arundel had previously expressed an opinion to King Richard, that Sir Simon de Burley deserved death.

"Didst thou not say to me in the time of *thy* parliament, when we were in the bath behind the Whitehall, that Sir Simon de Burley deserved to be put to death on several accounts? And did not I make answer, 'I know no reason why he should suffer death?' and yet, you and your companions traitorously took his life from him!" Such was the accusation by King Richard when Arundel stood on his trial to pay the bitter debt of vengeance

[1] After all, the divorce was not carried into effect, for in the year 1389 there is a letter of safe conduct from King Richard to his dearest cousin Philippa, wife to Robert de Vere.

that Richard had stored against him as the cause of his tutor's death.

The death of Sir Simon Burley was a bitter sorrow to the queen, perhaps her first sorrow; and, as it appears that the expenses of her journey from Germany being left unpaid by the government during the king's minority, ultimately led to the disgrace of her friend, the queen must have considered herself as the innocent cause of his death.

While the executions of Sir Simon Burley and many others of the king's adherents were proceeding in London, Richard and his queen retired to Bristol, and fixed their residence in the castle.

A civil war commenced which terminated in the defeat of the royal troops at Radcot Bridge, near Oxford, by the duke of Gloucester and young Henry of Bolingbroke. It was the queen's mediation alone that could induce Richard to receive the archbishop of Canterbury, when he came to propose an amnesty between the king and his subjects; two days and nights did Richard remain inflexible, till at last, by the persuasion of Anne, the archbishop was admitted to the royal presence.

"Many plans," says Froissart, "were proposed to the king; at last, by the good advice of the queen, he restrained his choler, and agreed to accompany the archbishop to London."

After the queen returned to London from Bristol, the proceedings of that parliament commenced which has been justly termed by history the Merciless. The queen's servants were the principal objects of its vengeance, the tendency to Lollardism in her household being probably the secret motive. It was in vain that the queen of England humbled herself to the very dust, in hopes of saving her faithful friends.

King Richard in an especial manner instanced the undutifulness of the earl of Arundel to the queen,[1] who, he declared, was three hours on her knees before this earl, pleading with tears for the life of John Calverley, one of her esquires. All the answer she could get was this, "Pray for yourself and your husband, for that is the best thing you can do, and let this request alone;" and all the importunities used could not save Calverley's life.[2] Indeed the duke of Gloucester and his colleagues established a reign of terror, making it penal for any person to testify fidelity to the king or queen, or to receive their confidence.

The duke of Ireland fled to the Low Countries, from whence he never returned during his life. It is worthy of remark, that the niece[3] of his ill-treated wife, for whose divorce the queen had intrigued with Pope Urban, married the great and powerful Emperor Sigismund, own brother to Anne of Bohemia.

The intermediate time from the autumn of 1387 to the spring of 1389 was spent by the young king and queen in a species of restraint. Eltham and Shene were the favourite residences of Richard and Anne, and in these palaces they chiefly sojourned at this time. The favourite summer palace of Anne was named, from the lovely landscape around it, Shene: tradition says that Edward the Confessor, delighting in the fair scenery, called it by that expressive Saxon word, signifying everything that is bright and beauteous.

The king had during this interval attained his twenty-second year, and his first question on the meeting of his parliament was, "How old he was?"

[1] At the trial of Arundel.

[2] State Trials, vol. i.

[3] Barbara, the daughter of her sister, by the count de Cilley. See Brooke's Succession of Kings, and Betham's Genealogies.

And when they named the years he had attained, he declared that his ancestors were always considered of age much earlier, and that the meanest of his subjects were of age at twenty-one; he therefore determined to shake off the fetters that controlled him. This scene was followed by a sort of re-coronation in St. Stephen's chapel, where the nobility renewed their oaths to him; and it was particularly observed that he kissed those with affection whom he considered as his adherents, and scowled on those who had been the leaders in the late insurrections.

The king always appears to have been exceedingly attached to his uncle, the duke of Lancaster, but he had a strong wish to rid himself of his turbulent and popular cousin, Henry, the eldest son of that duke, who was born the same year as himself, and from infancy was the king's rival. On one occasion Henry had threatened the life of the king in the presence of the queen.

"Thrice have I saved his life!" exclaimed King Richard. "Once my dear uncle Lancaster (on whom God have mercy) would have slain him for his treason and villany, and then, O God of Paradise! all night did I ride to preserve him from death. Once also he drew his sword on me in the chamber of Queen Anne."[1]

King Richard soon after bestowed on the duke of Lancaster the sovereignty of Aquitaine, probably with the design of keeping the son of that prince at a distance from England. The queen held a grand festival on this occasion. Part of the high ceremonial consisted in the queen's presentation of the duchess of Lancaster with

[1] This fray must have taken place in the year 1390, since Henry of Bolingbroke withdrew at that period from England, in order to carry arms against some unconverted tribes on the borders of Lithuania, with whom the Teutonic knights were waging a crusade warfare. (Speed.) Count Valerian Krasinski declares that the plain where the English prince encamped in Lithuania is still pointed out by the peasants.

the gold circlet she was to wear as duchess of Aquitaine, while Richard invested his uncle with the ducal coronet; but the investiture was useless, for the people of Aquitaine refused to be separated from the dominion of England.

The king's full assumption of the royal authority was celebrated with a splendid tournament, over which Queen Anne presided as the sovereign lady to bestow the prize—a rich jewelled clasp to the best tenant of the lists, and a rich crown of gold to the best of the opponents. Sixty of her ladies, mounted on beautiful palfreys, each led a knight by a silver chain to the tilting ground at Smithfield, through the streets of London, by the sound of trumpets, attended by numerous minstrels. In this order they passed before Queen Anne, who was already arrived with her ladies, and placed in open chambers,[1] richly decorated. The queen retired at dusk to the bishop of London's palace at St. Paul's, where she held a grand banquet, with dancing both before and after supper. During the whole of the tournament the queen lodged at the palace of the bishop of London.[2]

The queen's good offices as a mediator were required in the year 1392 to compose a serious difference between Richard II. and the city of London. Richard had asked a loan of a thousand pounds from the citizens, which they peremptorily refused. An Italian merchant offered the king the sum required, upon which the citizens raised a tumult, and tore the unfortunate loan-lender to pieces. This outrage being followed by a riot attended with bloodshed, Richard declared "that as the city did not keep his peace, he should resume her charters," and

[1] They were temporary stands erected at Smithfield, in the same manner as on the racing courses at present.

[2] See Col. Johnes' Notes to Froissart.

actually removed the courts of law to York. In distress, the city applied to Queen Anne to mediate for them. Fortunately, Richard had no other favourite at that time than his peace-loving queen, "who was," say the ancient historians, "very precious to the nation, being continually doing some good to the people; and she deserved a much larger dower than the sum settled on her, which only amounted to four thousand five hundred pounds per annum."

The manner in which Queen Anne pacified Richard, is preserved in a Latin chronicle poem, written by Richard Maydeston, an eye-witness of the scene;[1] he was a priest attached to the court, and in favour with Richard and the queen.

Through the private intercession of the queen, the King consented to pass through the city on his way from Shene to Westminster Palace; on the 29th of August.

When they arrived at Southwark the queen assumed her crown, which she wore during the whole procession through London: it was blazing with various gems of the choicest kinds; her dress was likewise studded with precious stones, and she wore a rich carcanet about her neck; she appeared, according to the taste of Maydeston, "fairest among the fair," and from the benign humility of her gracious countenance, the anxious citizens gathered hopes that she would succeed in pacifying the king. During the entry of the royal pair into the city, they rode at some distance from each other. At the first bridge-tower the king and queen were met by the lord mayor and other authorities, followed by a vast concourse of

[1] Lately published by the Camden Society. Maydeston's narrative is fully confirmed by a letter from Richard in the Fœdera, wherein he declares "he was reconciled to the citizens through the mediation of his dear wife the queen."

men, women, and children, every artificer bearing some symbol of his craft. Before the Southwark-bridge gate the king was presented with a pair of fair white steeds trapped with gold cloth, figured with red and white, and hung full of silver bells. "Steeds such as Cæsar might have been pleased to yoke to his car."

Queen Anne then arrived with her train, when the Lord Mayor Venner presented her with a small white palfrey, exquisitely trained, for her own riding. The lord mayor commenced a long speech with these words:

"O generous offspring of imperial blood, whom God hath destined worthily to sway the sceptre as consort of our king!"

He then proceeds to hint that mercy and not rigour best became the queenly station, and that gentle ladies had great influence with their loving lords; then entering into the merits of the palfrey, he commended its beauty, its docility, and the convenience of its ambling paces, and the magnificence of its purple housings. After the animal had been graciously accepted by the queen, she passed over the bridge and came to the bridge-portal on the city side; but some of her maids of honour, who were following her in two waggons or charrettes,[1] were not quite so fortunate in their progress over the bridge.

Old London Bridge was, in the fourteenth century and for some ages after, no such easy defile for a large influx of people to pass through: though not then encroached upon by houses and shops, it was encumbered by fortifications and barricades, which guarded the drawbridge

[1] These conveyances were neither more nor less than benched waggons, which were kept for the accommodation of the queen's maids of honour. The charrettes were very gaily ornamented with red paint, and lined with scarlet cloth throughout. They are described in the household books of royalty, very minutely; they must certainly have been more jolting and uneasy than carriers' carts.

towers in the centre, and the bridge-gate towers at each end. In this instance the multitudes pouring out of the city to get a view of the queen and her train, meeting the crowds following the royal procession, the throngs pressed on each other so tumultuously that one of the charrettes containing the queen's ladies was overturned —lady rolled upon lady, all being sadly discomposed in the upset; and, what was worse, nothing could restrain the laughter of the rude, plebeian artificers; at last the equipage was righted, the discomfited damsels replaced, and their charrette resumed its place in the procession. But such a reverse of horned caps did not happen without serious inconveniences to the wearers, as Maydeston very minutely particularises.

As the king and queen passed through the city, the principal thoroughfares were hung with gold cloth and silver tissue, and tapestry of silk and gold. When they approached the conduit at Cheapside, red and white wine played from the spouts of a tower erected against it, the royal pair were served "with rosy wine smiling in golden cups," and an angel flew down in a cloud, and presented to the king, and then to the queen, rich gold circlets worth several hundred pounds. Another conduit of wine played at St. Paul's eastern gate, where was stationed a band of antique musical instruments, whose names alone will astound modern musical ears. There were persons playing on tympanies, mono-chords, cymbals, psalteries, and lyres; zambucas, citherns, situlas, horns, and viols. Our learned Latinist dwells with much unction on the symphonous chorus produced by these instruments, which, he says, "wrapt all hearers in a kind of stupor." No wonder!

At the monastery of St. Paul's the king and queen alighted from their steeds, and passed through the ca-

thedral on foot, in order to pay their offerings at the holy sepulchre of St. Erkenwald. At the western gate they remounted their horses, and proceeded to the Ludgate. There, just above the river bridge, (which river, we beg to remind our readers, was that delicious stream, now called Fleet ditch,) was perched a celestial band of spirits, who saluted the royal personages, as they passed the Flete Bridge, with enchanting singing, and sweet psalmody, making withal a pleasant fume by swinging incense-pots; they likewise scattered fragrant flowers on the king and queen as they severally passed the bridge.

And if the odours of that civic stream the Flete at that time, by any means rivalled those which pertain to it at present, every one must own that a fumigation was appointed there with great judgment.

At the Temple barrier above the gate was the representation of a desert inhabited by all manner of animals, mixed with reptiles and monstrous worms, or, at least, by their resemblances; in the background was a forest; amidst the concourse of beasts, was seated the holy Baptist John,[1] pointing with his finger to an Agnus Dei. After the king had halted to view this scene, his attention was struck by the figure of St. John, for whom he had a peculiar devotion, when an angel descended from above the wilderness, bearing in his hands a splendid gift, which was a tablet studded with gems fit for any altar, with the crucifixion embossed thereon. The king took it in his hand and said, "Peace to this city; for the sake of Christ, his mother, and my patron St. John, I forgive every offence."

Then the king continued his progress towards his pa-

[1] The Temple was then in possession of the Hospitallers of St. John.

lace, and the queen arrived opposite to the desert and St. John, when Lord Mayor Venner presented her with another tablet, likewise representing the crucifixion. He commenced his speech with these words:—

"Illustrious daughter of imperial parents, Anne (a name in Hebrew signifying grace, and which was borne by her who was the mother of Christ), mindful of your race and name, intercede for us to the king; and as often as you see this tablet think of our city and speak in our favour."

Upon which the queen graciously accepted the dutiful offering of the city, saying, with the emphatic brevity of a good wife who knew her influence, "Leave all to me."

By this time the king had arrived at his palace of Westminster, the great hall of which was ornamented with hangings more splendid than the pen can describe. Richard's throne was prepared upon the King's Bench, which royal tribunal he ascended sceptre in hand, and sat in great majesty, when the queen and the rest of the procession entered the hall.

The queen was followed by her maiden train. When she approached the king she knelt down at his feet, and so did all her ladies. The king hastened to raise her, asking,

"What would Anna?—declare, and your request shall be granted."

The queen's answer is perhaps a fair specimen of the way in which she obtained her empire over the weak but affectionate mind of Richard; more honeyed words than the following, female blandishment could scarcely devise.

"Sweet," she replied, "my king, my spouse, my light, my life! Sweet love, without whose life mine would be but death! Be pleased to govern your citizens as a gra-

cious lord. Consider, even to-day, how munificent their treatment! What worship, what honour, what splendid public duty, have they at great cost paid to thee, revered king! Like us, they are but mortal, and liable to frailty. Far from thy memory, my king, my sweet love, be their offences, and for their pardon I supplicate, kneeling thus lowly on the ground."

Then, after some mention of Brutus and Arthur, ancient kings of Britain, which no doubt are interpolated flourishes of good Master Maydeston, the queen concludes her supplication by requesting "that the king would please to restore to these worthy and penitent plebeians their ancient charters and liberties."

"Be satisfied, dearest wife," the king answered, "loth should we be to deny thee any reasonable request of thine! Meantime ascend and sit beside me on my throne, while I speak a few words to my people."

He seated the gentle queen beside him on the throne. The king then spoke, and all listened in silence, both high and low. He addressed the Lord Mayor:—

"I will restore to you my royal favour as in former days, for I duly prize the expense which you have incurred, the presents you have made me, and the prayers of the queen. Do you henceforth avoid offence to your sovereign and disrespect to his nobles. Preserve the ancient faith; despise the new doctrines unknown to your fathers; defend the catholic church, the whole church, for there is no order of men in it that is not dedicated to the worship of God. Take back the key and sword; keep my peace in your city, rule its inhabitants as formerly, and be among them my representative."[1]

[1] This reconciliation cost the city 10,000*l*. From some allusions in the king's speech there is reason to suppose the riot had been laid on the Wickliffites.

No further differences with the king disturbed the country during the life of Anne of Bohemia. It is probable that if the existence of this beloved queen had been spared, the calamities and crimes of Richard's future years would have been averted by her mild advice.

Yet the king's extravagant generosity nothing could repress; the profusion of the royal household is severely commented upon by Walsingham and Knighton. Still, their strictures seem invidious; nothing but partisan malice could blame such hospitality as the following in a time of famine.

"Though a terrible series of plagues and famine afflicted England, the king retrenched none of his diversions or expenses. He entertained every day six thousand persons, most of whom were *indigent* poor. He valued himself on surpassing in magnificence all the sovereigns in Europe, as if he possessed an inexhaustible treasure; in his kitchen alone, three hundred persons were employed; and the queen had a like number to attend upon her service."[1]

While Richard was preparing for a campaign in Ireland, which country had revolted from his authority, his departure was delayed by a terrible bereavement. This was the loss of his beloved partner. It is supposed she died of the pestilence that was then raging throughout Europe, as her decease was heralded by an illness of but a few hours. Froissart says, speaking of the occurrences in England, June, 1394—

"At this period the Lady Anne, queen of England, fell sick, to the infinite distress of King Richard and all her household. Her disorder increased so rapidly, that she departed this life at the feast of Whitsuntide, 1394. The king and all who loved her were greatly afflicted at

[1] Walsingham.

her death. King Richard was inconsolable for her loss, as they mutually loved each other, having been married young. This queen left no issue, for she never bore a child.[1]

Anne of Bohemia died at her favourite palace of Shene; the king was with her when she expired. He had never given her a rival; she appears to have possessed his whole heart, which was rent by the most acute sorrow at the sudden loss of his faithful partner, who was, in fact, his only friend. In the frenzy of his grief, Richard imprecated the bitterest curses on the place of her death, and, unable to bear the sight of the place where he had passed his only happy hours with this beloved and virtuous queen, he ordered the palace of Shene to be levelled with the ground.

The deep tone of Richard's grief is apparent even in the summons sent by him to the English peers, requiring their attendance to do honour to the magnificent obsequies he had prepared for his lost consort. His letters on this occasion are in existence, and are addressed to each of his barons in this style:

"VERY DEAR AND FAITHFUL COUSIN,[2]—

"Inasmuch as our beloved companion, the queen, (whom God has hence commanded,) will be buried at Westminster, on Monday the third of August next, we earnestly entreat that you (setting aside all excuses) will repair to our city of London, the Wednesday previous to the same day, bringing with you our very dear kinswoman, your consort, at the same time.

"We desire that you will, the preceding day, accompany the corpse of our dear consort from our manor of Shene to Westminster; and for this we trust we may rely on you, as you desire our honour, and that of our kingdom. Given under our privy seal at Westminster, the 10th day of June 1394."

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[1] The apartments where the queen died were actually dismantled, but Henry V. restored them.

[2] The style of this circular will prove how much modern historians are mistaken who declare, that King Henry IV. first adopted that form of royal address, which terms all earls the king's cousins; yet the authority is no less than that of Blackstone. It does not appear that this circular was confined to earls.

We gather from this document, that Anne's body was brought from Shene in grand procession, the Wednesday before the 3rd of August, attended by all the nobility of England, male and female; likewise by the citizens and authorities of London,[1] all clothed in black, with black hoods, and on the 3rd of August the queen was interred.

"Abundance of wax was sent for from Flanders for flambeaux and torches, and the illumination was so great that nothing was seen like it before, not even at the burial of the good queen Philippa; the king would have it so, because she was daughter of the emperor of Rome and Germany."[2]

The most memorable and interesting circumstance at the burial of Anne of Bohemia is the fact, that Thomas Arundel, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, who preached her funeral sermon, in the course of it greatly commended the queen for reading the holy Scriptures in the vulgar tongue.[3]

Richard's grief was as long enduring as it was acute. One year elapsed before he had devised the species of monument he thought worthy the memory of his beloved Anne, yet his expressions of tenderness regarding her pervaded his covenant with the London artificers employed to erect this tomb. He took, withal, the extraordinary

[1] The Fœdera contains a circular from the king to the citizens, nearly similar to the above.

[2] Froissart.

[3] Rapin, vol. i. 701. There is a great contradiction between Rapin and Foxe when alluding to this funeral sermon. Foxe, in his dedication of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels to queen Elizabeth in 1571, uses these words:—"Thomas Arundel, Archbishop, at the funeral oration of queen Anne in 1394, did avouch, as Polydore Virgil saith, that she had the gospels with divers expositors which she sent unto him to be verified and examined." This is the direct contrary to Rapin's assertion, yet the whole current of events in Richard II.'s reign strongly supports the assertion of the early reformers that Anne of Bohemia was favourably inclined to them. Certain it is that her brother King Winceslaus of Bohemia (though no great honour to the cause) encouraged the Hussites in her native country.

step of having his own monumental statue made to repose by that of the queen, with the hands of the effigies clasped in each other.

The tomb of Anne was commenced in 1395; the indentures descriptive of its form are to be found in the Fœdera; the marble part of the monument was consigned to the care of Stephen Lote, citizen and mason of London, and Henry Yevele his partner.

In the document alluded to above occur these remarkable words: "And also inscriptions are to be graven about the tomb, such as will be delivered proper for it." The actual inscription is in Latin; the sentiments are tender and elegant, and the words probably composed by the king himself, as it enters into the personal and mental qualifications of Anne, like one who knew and loved her. The Latin commences,

"Sub petra lata mana Anna jacet tumulata," &c.

The following is a literal translation:[1]

"Under this stone lies Anna, here entombed,
Wedded in this world's life to the second Richard.
To Christ were her meek virtues devoted,
His poor she freely fed from her treasures;
Strife she assuaged, and swelling feuds appeased.
Beauteous her form, her face surpassing fair.
On July's seventh day, thirteen hundred ninety-four,
All comfort was bereft, for through irremediable sickness
She passed away into eternal joys."

Richard departed for Ireland soon after the burial of Anne, but his heart was still bleeding for the loss of his queen; and though her want of progeny was one of the principal causes of the troubles of his reign, he mourned

[1] There likewise hung a tablet in Latin, probably belonging to the hearse. Skelton has translated it in his usual vulgar jingle. As the more interesting epitaph is given, the tablet verses are omitted, but they may be seen in Stow.

for her with the utmost constancy of affection. Frequently, when he was in his council-chamber at Dublin, if anything accidentally recalled her to his thoughts, he would burst into tears, and be obliged to leave the room.[1]

"The year of her death," says Walsingham, "was notable for splendid funerals. Constance duchess of Lancaster, a lady of great innocency of life, died then; and her daughter-in-law, the co-heiress of Hereford, wife of Henry of Bolingbroke, and mother of his children, died in the bloom of life. She was followed to the tomb by Isabel duchess of York, second daughter to Pedro the Cruel, a lady noted for her over-fineness and delicacy, yet at her death showing much penitence for her pestilent vanities.[2] But the grief for all these deaths by no means equalled that of the king for his own Queen Anne, whom he loved even to madness."

The people of England likewise deeply regretted this benignant and peace-loving queen, and long hallowed her memory by the simple yet expressive appellation of "Good Queen Anne."[3]

[1] Burton's Irish History. [2] Heiress of Pedro the Cruel.

[3] A letter written by Queen Anne is preserved in the Archives of Queen's College, Oxford, in favour of learning. We have received this intimation from Mr. Halliwell, whose learned and intelligent labours in the Camden Society are well known.

END OF VOL. II.

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